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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A Social History of Cycling in Edmonton, 1890-1897

by

Robert M. Hess

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
Spring 1991

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled A SOCIAL HISTORY OF CYCLING IN EDMONTON, 1890-1897 submitted by ROBERT M. HESS in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS.

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Date 20th Dec 1990

ABSTRACT

The development of sporting forms in nineteenth century Edmonton has received little attention from historians. This investigation, by providing a detailed narrative of events that trace the evolution of cycling in a pioneer town between 1890 and 1897, not only fills a gap in the literature but illustrates a number of important themes concerning the relationship between sport and community life on the frontier.

In an historical context, the activity of cycling has usually been presented as an urban phenomenon. However, in the semi-rural setting of northern Alberta, other explanations for the popularity of the bicycle are required. Accordingly, this study suggests that economic imperatives influenced the form and function of cycling in Edmonton, reflecting a pioneer mentality that was characterized by metropolitan aspirations, financial prosperity and entrepreneurial spirit. An analysis of the membership and activities of the North Star Bicycle Club, an exclusive cycling group formed in 1896, is used to support this contention, and comparisons are drawn with the more broadly based Edmonton Bicycle Club, first established in 1893.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis was greatly assisted by the support and encouragement of a number of individuals, to whom I owe my gratitude. In this respect I wish to specifically acknowledge the contributions of the following people:

David Glass, curatorial assistant at the Reynolds-Alberta Museum, Wetaskiwin, who shared his resources and an immense practical knowledge of bicycles with enthusiasm and candour.

Dr. Gerry Redmond and Dr. Rod Macleod, members of my committee, who both made valuable comments on earlier drafts of the text and guided my thinking in useful directions.

Dr. Peter Lindsay, my supervisor and mentor, who not only nurtured this project from its inception, but inspired me to think critically and creatively about the relationship between sport and history, developing an approach that has greatly enhanced my academic life.

And my wife, Sally Cowden, who shared the highs and lows of graduate student life with me during our stay in Canada. To her I offer my thanks and my love.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: Setting the Scene

Studies in the history of sport and society bear a substantial historiographical burden. For even though this investigation is ostensibly concerned with the development of a single sport in one location during a specified period of time, it is clear that far more than a mere description of events is required. In particular, if Theodore Zeldin is correct in asserting that history is _the_ most ambitious form of social inquiry, then it is also important to note that practitioners within the discipline prefer to think of themselves as intellectual pioneers. That is, they see themselves as pushing back the frontiers of knowledge, and transforming the very methods of history itself.[1] Therefore, any study which purports to provide a context for the social history of cycling in late nineteenth century Edmonton should not only look for new clues to facilitate a better understanding of the past, but it should focus the reader's attention on questions which lie at the heart of methodological debates in the social sciences. For these reasons, a brief background to some of the historiographical issues surrounding this investigation is appropriate.

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[1] T. Zeldin, "Social History and Total History," _Journal of Social History_ (Vol. 10, No. 2, 1976), p. 237.

According to Paul Zingg, the study of American sport during the postwar period was lost in the intellectual badlands. "Ignored by scholars who stuck to traditional modes of inquiry in their disciplines and impaired by efforts which reflected naivete and simplicity, sport history studies generally provided few contributions to understanding culture and society."[2] But slowly and somewhat cautiously, he maintains, the situation began to change. Several significant forces which had a profound effect on the shape of American historiography came into play, and after a decade of political ferment new intellectual attitudes were formed. Eventually, the door was thrown open to fresh and more widely respected research into the fields of social history and popular culture, and the study of sport became an integral part of this new imperative to explore society in a considerably broader context.[3] Thus, by the mid 1970s the goal had become balanced history where the creation of an overall picture of society in all its facets, with appropriate weight given to each, allowed the connections between sport and social life to be fully explored.[4]

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[2] P.J. Zingg, "Introduction" in P.J. Zingg (ed.) The Sporting Image. Readings in American Sport History (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988), p. IX. He goes on to describe much of the work as "...embarrassingly hagiographic, tediously statistical, and remarkably superficial."

[3] Ibid. See also E.J. Hobsbawm, "From Social History to the History of Society," Daedalus (Vol. 100, No. I, 1971), pp. 20-45 who gives a general overview of developments in social history at this time, and J.W. Berryman, "Sport History as Social History?" Quest (Vol. XX, June, 1982), pp. 65-73, who examines the historical relationship between the two disciplines.

Developments in Canada followed in a similar vein. What little sport history there was had originally derived from Departments of Physical Education and not from Departments of History, and therefore the focus had tended to be on sport per se rather than on viewing it as a vital part of society's past.[5] More trenchant critics were thus able to attack much of the initial work as merely the collection of "one damn fact after another," although given the paucity of knowledge in the field it is not surprising that these earlier "first order" studies were limited in scope.[6] In the last decade, however, it has become clear that sport historians in both Canada and the United States, particularly those steeped in the literature and methods of social history, have become more sophisticated in their questions and in their explanations of change over time.[7] It is generally acknowledged that sport is not peripheral to society, and that the patterns of behaviour, attitudes, and qualities within sport are key factors in understanding basic cultural values.[8] Moreover, according to commentators such as Nancy Struna, sport is now correctly being viewed as an area of human activity to be explained in a comparative manner - in the light of and in the context of other behaviours. The aim is "... [to explain] not only the what, but also the where, the how, and the why of sporting forms and functions among citizens of various socio-economic levels and demographic and occupational variations." In this way, the result is a better understanding of human society,and the significance of sport to it.[9]

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[4] P.N. Stearns, "Coming of Age," Journal of Social History (Vol. 10, No.2, 1976), p. 252. It should also be noted that the emergence of social history in itself presupposed a reorientation of the writing of history, both in context and method, and served to undermine the long held tenets of historical scholarship. An example of this was the tendency to examine the private existence of individuals so as to redress to the impotence of their public experience. See J. Chesneaux, Past and Futures or What is History For? (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), chap. 3, and E. Fox-Genovese and E.D. Genovese, "The Political Crisis of Social History: A Marxian Perspective," Journal of Social History (Vol. 10, No. 2, 1976), p. 213.

[5] A. Metcalfe, Canada Learns to Play: The Emergence of Organized Sport 1807-1914 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1987), p. 9.

[6] D. Morrow, "Canadian Sport History: A Critical Essay," Journal of Sport History (Vol. 10, No. I, 1983), p. 69. Morrow is particularly harsh on the early studies on Canadian sport history completed at the University of Alberta under the supervision of Professor Max Howell.

For the purpose of this study, a note of caution needs to be struck. In descriptive terms, there has been almost nothing of relevance written about cycling in late nineteenth century Albertan towns. Indeed, the definitive social history of early Edmonton has yet to be published, and so the task of situating the origins and development of cycling activities within the firm cultural context demanded by Struna and others becomes extremely difficult.

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[7] N.L. Struna, "In 'Glorious Disarray': The Literature of American Sport History," Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport (Vol. 56, No. 2, 1985), p. 151.
[8] Metcalfe, p. 14.
[9] Struna, p. 155.

Therefore, Zeldin's noble call for social history to be total history must be tempered somewhat in a limited study such as this. After all, there is some danger that because the history of society involves so much that ought to be considered, and there are so many connections between so many elements, it may not even be possible to give the past a rational order. As Howard Becker laments, "We know we cannot describe everything ... But what to leave out? And where should we put what we leave in? The empirical world may be ordered, but not in any simple way that dictates which topics should be taken up first."[10] These concerns illustrate that the problem of deciding what is significant in history is crucial to interpretations of the past. More pointedly, when a substantial subject area is bereft of all but the most basic of surveys, as is the case in an investigation of this nature, then the available mass of raw data can appear to be not only inscrutable but overwhelming. In order to avoid the avalanche of despair that such a volume of material provokes, particularly in the light of portentous claims for the discipline as a whole, Becker's practical advice needs to be heeded:

> It's alright [sic] to aim for the stars but we ought to have a decent regard for what is humanly possible. If making a scientific or scholarly revolution singlehandedly is our goal, we are

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[10] H.S. Becker, Writing for Social Scientists. How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 132-133.

> bound to fail. Better ... to do a piece of good work others can use, and thus increase knowledge and understanding. Since we can attain these things in our own research and writing, we don't set ourselves up for failure by aiming at the impossible."[11]

For these reasons, the reader can appreciate the value of an approach that has sometimes been characterized as "history by the ounce." By considering a small area of human activity, carefully examining it, comparing and contrasting it with similar actions, and seeking to understand it in relation to other social institutions, a comprehension of its meaning and significance for particular groups of people can be gained. The detail that such studies require may then provide the depth of knowledge needed to challenge and perhaps change perceptions of the past.

However, the task of providing adequate background material for a detailed inquiry into late nineteenth century cycling is fraught with difficulty. One historian of Edmonton, Carl Betke, is almost mournful in his description of the dubious nature of sources for the town's early history. The best available published material, he says, is "... not altogether and everywhere untrustworthy, but rather uneven and constantly to be treated with caution."[12] This lament is particularly applicable to newspapers of the period, for despite their extensive use as sources in previous studies of frontier life, they have never received the critique they obviously deserve.[13] Given that Alberta's first newspaper, the Edmonton Bulletin, reflected the editor's "... peppery personality and Liberal political views,"[14] the notion of context becomes all the more relevant. How, then, can the scene be set for an examination of sport and social life in a pioneer town? Although Paul Voisey's work on the Vulcan area in Alberta does not deal specifically with Edmonton, it does provide an excellent overview of recent debates on the formation of new communities in the Canadian west. Significantly, it is the issues raised by these debates that form an ideal platform for the following discussion, since Voisey strongly challenges accepted models of frontier society, and clearly demonstrates that no single historical theory can do justice to the complex interaction of forces which determined the nature of pioneer settlements.[15] Indeed, his notion that frontier life was complex is a crucial one, for despite Edmonton's relatively small population base, estimated at

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[11] Ibid., p. 140.

[12] C.F. Betke, "The Development of Urban Community in Prairie Canada: Edmonton, 1898-1931," University of Alberta: Unpublished doctoral thesis, 1981, p. 40.

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[13] W.M. McLennan, Sport in Early Calgary (Calgary: Fort Brisebois Publishing, 1983), for example, offers virtually no analysis of his newspaper sources, and makes no attempt to comment on obvious errors and inconsistencies in the reports.

[14] J.G. MacGregor, Edmonton: A History (Edmonton: M.G. Hurtig, 1967), Revised Edition, 1975, p. 91.

[15] P. Voisey, Vulcan. The Making of a Prairie Community (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), p. 1.

700 when the town was incorporated in 1892,[16] it is clear that its wide variety of formal institutions and the structure of community life on the prairies cannot be explained in any simple fashion. Familiar themes which emphasize _either_ frontier setting, local environment, transplanted heritage or metropolitan influences as major determinants in frontier development err by downplaying other significant factors, and suffer from a lack of intensive research to support their various conclusions.[17] Voisey even goes so far as to suggest that the powerful and more recent metropolitan thesis which insists that great cities directed and controlled frontier society, has been adopted by many Canadian scholars largely because it reinforces the idea of an east-west economy and highlights a distinctive Canadian experience of continental expansion. But he is not content with mere criticism of such monolithic theories, for he deliberately attempts to show how tradition, frontier, environment and metropolis _interacted_ in extremely variable ways to exert uneven pressure on key aspects of community life. Moreover, he seeks to explain how the pioneers themselves consciously sought to shape their society, sometimes struggling to recreate the life they had left, and sometimes allowing the new setting to

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[16] Most figures for this period are estimates, and it is not always clear whether population statistics for South Edmonton are included in published sources.
[17] Voisey, p. 5.

mould them in some different way.[18] By virtue of this approach, the pioneers emerge not as inanimate objects battered by forces they cannot control or understand, but as social actors who have the ability to modify or to make their own history.[19] From this perspective, the reasons why the frontier, and Edmonton in particular, attracted particular types of people can be better understood. As Voisey writes, "[The new settlers] believed that special qualities distinguished them from other people: courage, enterprise, optimism, determination, independence, neighbourliness, generosity, straight-forwardness, and honesty. Although vague about whether the frontier attracted people with such qualities or moulded them, the pioneers found these beliefs irresistible."[20] But how should "the frontier" be defined, and why was it such an attraction for new settlers?

The frontier can be said to embody a particular process whereby communities are built in areas where none exist, except where there may be native host populations. Voisey's pragmatic definition thus incorporates the more traditional features of frontier life such as sparse population relative to resources, population growth dependent largely on migration, and a predominance of young, single men, but it is not confined to the familiar notions of egalitarianism, democracy, and stages of economic development.[21] His stress on the community building process also weakens arguments that rely on the sale of vacant land, a stable population, or the formation of certain institutions to indicate the supposed end of a frontier era. Since people and places experience continuous change, Voisey contends, there is little benefit in pinpointing these somewhat arbitrary signs of maturity.[22] With this in mind, it is difficult to support Carl Betke's assumption that Edmonton was transformed from a rural centre to an urban community in a short space of time.[23] In fact, the transformation was an ongoing process, and it may be more accurate to describe Edmonton as a pre-urban "town" during this early period, rather than emphasizing its status as a "city," however large it may have been. Moreover, Betke's 'slice' approach to historical analysis (an examination of discrete years at regular intervals) tends to hamper an adequate appreciation of a more gradual shift to urbanism. Calgary, for example, had twice the population of Edmonton in 1897, but was it any more an "urban centre" than its northern neighbour?[24] Distinctions such as these are far from trivial, especially when the bulk of secondary sources uniformly place cycling in the context of urban development.[25]

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[18] Ibid.

[19] This point is stressed in a more general context by S. Hardy and A.G. Ingham "Games, Structures, and Agency: Historians on the American Play Movement," Journal of Social History (Vol. 17, No. 2, 1983), p. 285. They also acknowledge that human agency exists at a variety of levels, and is often fragmented. Ibid., p. 292.

[20] Voisey, p. 28.

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[21] Ibid., p. 6.
[22] Ibid.
[23] For instance, he believes that an 1897 agreement to build a combined railway and traffic bridge across the North Saskatchewan river was "... a necessary first step in the conversion from dream to reality of local aspirations to rapid urbanization." Betke, "Urban Community," p. 28.

Aside from definitional problems, there is also the challenge of explaining the mentality of settlers who were drawn to isolated areas in western Canada. And once again it must be acknowledged that a small population base belies the complexity of that task. Most frontier communities drew settlers from diverse cultural, social, and geographical backgrounds, so single generalizations of pioneer habits and attitudes can be misleading.[26] In addition, while most studies agree that males dominated much of frontier life, it is possible that such claims exaggerate the gender imbalance and overlook the impact of a surprisingly high number of resident families.[27] Eliane Silverman, for example, examines the validity of the Victorian work ethic for pioneer Albertan women, and demonstrates that the reality of their experience not only contradicts many frontier myths, but provides fresh insights into how the history of pioneer societies should be approached.[28] Thus while Voisey argues that a degree of sexual specialization characterized the forging of new communities, Silverman cautions that the separation of male and female spheres was difficult to maintain on frontier farms and towns.[29] In particular, she says, "The work world of men and women was similar in its drudgery and its sheer and simple necessity."[30] If this were the case, community building in the wilderness needs to take account of more than male experiences, for it seems that women had the responsibility of bringing culture, civilization and refinement to the frontier.[31] In essence, it is necessary to explore concepts which reveal not only the character of pioneer men and women, but the motivation that led them to leave their homes and strike into the unknown.

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[24] Like Betke, H.C. Klassen, "Bicycles and Automobiles in Early Calgary," Alberta History (Spring, 1976), pp. 1-8 also uses the term "city" rather loosely.

[25] See, for example, S. Hardy, How Boston Played: Sport, Recreation and Community, 1865-1915 (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1982), R. Harmond "Progress and Flight: An Interpretation of the American Cycle Craze of the 1890s," in P.J. Zingg (ed.), The Sporting Image. Readings in American Sport History (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988), pp. 227-246 and S.A. Reiss City Games: The Evolution of American Urban Society and the Rise of Sports (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989).

[26] Voisey, p. 7.

[27] Ibid., p. 18.

For many, the frontier represented a clean slate, where any and all things might be possible, and where visions of the future were characterized not by restraint or moderation but by boldness and aggression.[32] Voisey informs his readers that the massive influx of settlers into western Canada occurred during the 'Golden Age' of agriculture, and even though many arrived without a background in farming, the rhetoric of 'grand opportunities' and 'great possibilities' was a powerful lure.[33] An even stronger incentive, and one that was in some ways fanned by the lack of traditional forms, customs, and standards, was the desire for wealth. For even though the image of the prairie settler seeking a permanent new life is a popular one, the evidence suggests that many pioneers were in fact restless for financial prosperity rather than domestic security.[34] This is an important observation in many respects, for it throws light on the social structure of the frontier and provides insights into the pioneer mentality, both of which help in the understanding of sporting forms and functions of the period. Indeed, this study suggests that the economic imperative was a vital element in the development of cycling in Edmonton, and perhaps in other prairie towns, for a strong 'mercenary' attitude imbued not only business enterprises but leisure activities as well. A short overview of Edmonton's early history will therefore provide important background information on how this situation arose and give direction to a more detailed analysis of sport and social life in a late nineteenth century pioneer town.

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[28] E.L. Silverman, "Women and the Victorian Work Ethic on the Alberta Frontier: Prescription and Description," in H. Palmer and D. Smith (eds.), The New Provinces: Alberta and Saskatchewan, 1905-1980 (Vancouver: Tantalus Research, 1980), p. 97.
[29] Ibid., p. 94.
[30] Ibid., p. 99.
[31] Voisey, p. 27.
[32] Ibid., p. 32.

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[33] _Ibid_., p. 34-41.
[34] Silverman, p. 92 and Voisey, p. 52 both make this point.

One direct consequence of the quest for wealth on the frontier was a transient population. As Betke notes, many of Edmonton's early settlers seem to have originally pointed themselves more generally and vaguely toward western Canada, occasionally even passing briefly into the United States prior to arriving in Edmonton, and most were relatively young when they came.[35] Edmonton itself was initially established as a fur trading post by the Hudson's Bay Company, but with the termination of their territorial control and the transfer of the vast Northwest to Canadian authority in 1870, there was a rush to exploit the huge tracts of land which became available. As a result, fifty members of the North West Mounted Police were posted to nearby Fort Saskatchewan in 1874 to ensure the peaceful settlement of the area. Although the Hudson's Bay Company relinquished effective control over the territory, it nevertheless reserved over three thousand acres of land in the heart of Edmonton.[36] Previously there had been little concern over titles as long as people stayed off Company land, but when a number of businesses sprang up to provide services for the surrounding agricultural region, property rights came into focus.[37] The attraction of cheap land was also enhanced by plans to include Edmonton as part of the transcontinental railway system, making it possible for many entrepreneurs to achieve their goal of moving in, acquiring land, selling out, and then moving on - a pattern of settlement which had been repeated all across the western prairies.[38] It was the possibility of land speculation, therefore, an enterprise that dwarfed all other money-making schemes, which originally lured settlers to Edmonton, helped to define the character of the fledgling town, and eventually lured people away. In other words, people came not to stay, but to get rich.[39] Thus when the proposed railway route was altered in order to protect Canada's isolated southern border, the boom in property values quickly subsided, and it was left to the remaining businessmen and other part-time farmers to promote the agricultural development of the region during the 1880s.[40] Although most of the families in Edmonton were providing basic services mainly for each other, and were generally removed in occupation from the countryside, they could only survive in the long term if the resource development of land continued.[41] From this perspective, then, it can be appreciated that the activities of the Agricultural Society and the Board of Trade were important prerequisites which hastened the construction of a railway spur connection from

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[35] Betke, "Urban Community," p. 57.
[36] Ibid., p. 17.
[37] MacGregor, p. 92.

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[38] Voisey, p. 41.
[39] Ibid., p. 37.
[40] Betke, "Urban Community," p. 22 suggests that the Edmonton Bulletin, first published in 1880, was designed to appeal specifically to farmers during this period.
[41] Ibid., p. 59.

Calgary to South Edmonton at the start of the new decade. Indeed, the promise of a railway extension across the North Saskatchewan river was enough to justify Edmonton's incorporation as a town early in 1892, especially given the election of Bulletin editor Frank Oliver to the Northwest Territories Assembly in the previous year.[42] Efforts to draw attention to the vast potential of the area were renewed and Edmonton became touted as the "Gateway to the North," a town which took pride in the virtues of "Industry, Energy, and Enterprise."[43] Thus, despite the bitter winters of 1892 and 1893 and an economic recession in most parts of Canada, more and more settlers began to bypass the more established township of Calgary and opt instead for the latent possibilities of Edmonton. With a population of almost twelve hundred by the middle of the decade, the stage was now set for a widespread proliferation of social and sporting organizations within the community and it is in this context that the development of cycling in Edmonton can be examined.

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[42] Ibid., p. 25. See also R.A. Christenson, "The Calgary and Edmonton Railway and the Edmonton Bulletin," University of Alberta: Unpublished masters thesis, 1967, p. 254, for an explanation of how the prospect of railway construction engendered optimism and confidence in the future.

[43] A phrase adopted as the town motto soon after incorporation in 1892.

CHAPTER II

"NOT BAD FOR A WESTERN BICYCLE CLUB":

Cycling on the Frontier

One of Edmonton's more prominent citizens in the early 1890's was Isaac Cowie. A real estate and insurance agent, and a former manager of the Hudson's Bay Company's northern transport operations, Cowie was elected to the Town Council and acted as secretary of the Board of Trade for several years.[1] In a lengthy report intended to lure prospective settlers to northern Alberta, reprinted in the Edmonton Bulletin of March 1896, Cowie explained to readers in Winnipeg that:

> Edmonton was connected by rail with the world in the fall of 1891. It immediately applied for incorporation and has trebled its population and wealth in the four years which have elapsed. It now fulfills all the requirements of a modern town, with the promise and potency of ever increasing progress; and not the least among the future cities of the plain will be that of Edmonton.[2]

Cowie's enthusiasm, however, was only directed at the wealthier sections of society, for later in the same article he specifically discouraged the interest of labourers who were contemplating the potential of the Northwest Territories. "Men without the means of cultivating and stocking a government homestead, or of buying other lands and similarly using them should not come...," he said, "But if a man has some knowledge of farming and the capital just mentioned let him come to the Edmonton district where he can find a combination of prairie, wood, water, coal and gold on a quarter section."[3] There was some work available for labouring men on a few of the older and larger farms, but in general the "land of gold and grain" required settlers with money, education and ambition.[4] In many ways the assumptions made by Isaac Cowie reflect a significant social division in the Edmonton community, for as Carl Betke points out, the absence of labourers from most contemporary accounts bears an important silent testimony to the way in which citizens of various social classes were perceived.[5] If it is possible to characterize Edmonton's wealthier settlers as an elite within society, then it is obvious that many of the surviving documents from the period will emphasize their perspective and down play the relevance of less privileged members of the community. That is, it should be recognized that the sources which social historians have been accustomed to using and believing, namely newspapers, tend to provide us with a rather lofty view of history, or at least an interpretation of events that ignores the experiences of less educated, less ambitious and less wealthy sections of society. History from above, as it were, has the potential to be misleading for it is naturally the history of those who survive and those who have the ability, the desire, and the wherewithal to record their opinions for later generations. It is often, therefore, a less complex history, and prone to mythology, for it fails to take account of other visions of self, of experience, of relationships, that lie outside the concerns of an articulate elite.[6] It should be stressed, then, that observations on the history of cycling in early Edmonton rely on a narrow selection of sources which reflect particular views of sport and society. Nevertheless, as a starting point for a more thorough analysis of Edmonton's social history, this study does have value since the consideration of a single physical activity in a pioneer town may in fact pose questions that will eventually lead in other worthwhile directions. But it would be erroneous to think that the formation of Edmonton's first bicycle club in 1893 is anything more than an arbitrary point at which to begin our investigation. History itself is a continuous process, and any boundaries set out in regard to time and place will necessarily be artificial.[7] So, while this investigation is concerned with cycling in the late nineteenth century, it should be obvious that organizations

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[1] Edmonton Bulletin (hereafter abbreviated to Bulletin) 2 January 1896, 6 January 1896, 24 February 1896.
[2] Bulletin 23 March 1896.

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[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Betke, "Urban Community," p. 59.

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[6] Silverman, pp. 96-97.
[7] Hardy, How Boston Played, emphasizes this point in his Preface.

(and bicycles) did not just spring up 'out of nowhere,' despite the predilection of many historians to cite the initial meeting of a club as the beginning of interest in a certain activity. In the case of Edmonton's first bicycle club, formed on Monday evening, 12 June 1893, "... with G.R.F. Kirkpatrick honorary president; P.L. McNamara president and J. Stovel captain," there is ample evidence that a variety of cycling activities pre-dated such a meeting. McNamara himself had already won first prize in the one mile championship for the Northwest Territories in the previous year, and took great pride in the conspicuous display of his machine and medals.[8] The Methodist church, meanwhile, fostered interest in the sport by sponsoring a lecture on railway velocipedes. With music provided by "the church choir and assisting friends," and an admission charge of twenty five cents, the Reverend George Dean recounted his adventures on his journey through the Rocky Mountains, providing listeners with a foretaste of his cycling activities in Edmonton, and no doubt fuelling their enthusiasm for the formation of a bicycle club a few months later.[9] To understand the circumstances which led the citizens of the town to formally institute a cycling club requires more than a citation from a newspaper report and it is therefore misleading to trace the growth of the sport through the use of inaugural meeting dates. It is far more beneficial, albeit more difficult, to examine the social conditions and attitudes which brought about the need for clubs, be they sporting or otherwise.

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[8] Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. B6401.

[9] Bulletin 13 March 1893.

Despite the ebullience and the frequency of accounts such as those produced by Isaac Cowie, descriptions and photographs of Edmonton at this time reveal a town with little organization and seemingly ad hoc arrangements for business and social life. As Carl Betke explains, the civic authorities struggled through the 1890s with a series of inadequate and makeshift solutions to problems of waste, sewerage, street lighting and municipal transport, and there was no cohesive planning policy, except to provide certain basic services for the town at large.[10] Sporting contests and activities of the period also suggest variety without cohesion, as events such as skating carnivals, hunting trips, picnics and fairs occurred sporadically and did not always involve events of a competitive nature. Low population density, of course, is a factor which helps to explain why team sports had such an uncertain life span, but the number and frequency of social activities indicate an availability of leisure time which belies repeated observations concerning the isolation and loneliness of frontier life.[11] A powerful urge for social contact lay behind the plethora of organizations and, as Voisey says, it was an urge which most afflicted those who experienced the greatest isolation in their daily lives - male bachelors. These were men who had the time and the desire to pursue the benefits that club life could bring. For this reason, perhaps, it was sporting activities such as curling, golf and boating, which allowed substantial amounts of socializing during play, that began to flourish. Curling, in particular, was an ideal sport in this regard since both men and women could compete, an unlimited number of teams could participate, and age was not a barrier. Moreover, as a winter activity it allowed people with plenty of time on their hands to be active almost every night of the week.[12] While sharing some of these advantages, the activity of cycling needs to be considered from a somewhat different perspective. Cycling could be enjoyed as a sport in itself, but the bicycle also served as a convenient means of transport. Newspaper reports and photographs of the period reveal that cycling "runs" in Edmonton often ended with social gatherings and picnics,[13] and the bicycle carried spectators and participants to and from various sporting activities, notably to the headquarters of the golf club at

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[10] Betke, "Urban Community," p. 35. See C. W. Mathers, Souvenir of the Edmonton District (New York: Albetype Co., 1897) for photographs of several street scenes of the period.

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[11] Voisey, p. 158.
[12] Ibid., p. 165.
[13] Betke, "Urban Community," p. 38.

Chief Factor Hardisty's "Big House,"[14] and, late in the decade, across the river to baseball games in South Edmonton, where "Bus loads of people were present from both towns, and the atmosphere was thick with bicycles."[15] In addition, the bicycle was used for business purposes, and longer journeys to distant locations were occasionally attempted.[16] Hence, although the initial impetus behind the formation of cycling clubs across North America may have come from young men intent on seeing how fast they could travel, the wider uses of the bicycle quickly shaped and influenced the type of activities that were engaged in.[17] The breakthrough which led to these developments and ensured the continued popularity of the bicycle for leisure and transport was undoubtedly the invention of the pneumatic tire. As David Glass notes, while the concept of an air-filled tire had its beginnings in Scotland in 1845, it was not until 1888 that an Irishman named John Dunlop designed a tire suitable for use on the "safety" bicycle.[18] Significantly, according to Richard Harmond,

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[14] A photograph of golf club members in 1896 shows several bicycles resting against the veranda of the building. Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. B6629.

[15] Bulletin 19 June 1899.

[16] See, for example, the Bulletin 29 August 1895 and 8 October 1896.

[17] Harmond, p. 233.

[18] D. J. Glass, A History of the Development of the Bicycle Including the Canadian Industry and Alberta Usage (Westaskiwin: Alberta Culture, Reynolds-Alberta Museum, 1985), p. 24.

> "Because it reduced rolling friction, the air-filled tire added to a vehicles speed; and because it absorbed road shock, the tire not only increased riding comfort, but also enabled manufacturers to cut back on the weight of the bicycle.[19]

The pneumatic tire was introduced into Canada in 1890 and with the subsequent improvement offered by the application of the "single tube" tire in 1892, the burgeoning cycling industry received a noticeable fillip as buyers clamoured for mechanically superior machines.[20]

The involvement of women in cycling was also facilitated by various forms of technological advance and changes in social attitudes. Mounting and riding the high-wheeled "ordinary" or the heavy "boneshaker" while dressed in restrictive clothing was particularly difficult, and the development of the drop-framed "safety" was to have a marked impact on the willingness and ability of women to participate in cycling activities.[21] In fact, the "penny farthing" was so demanding to ride that it usually only appealed to athletic and adventurous males. "Headers," arising from poor roads, collisions, and a lack of brakes, were very common, and acted as a deterrent to all but genuine enthusiasts.[22] Cycling itself, moreover, was still a relatively new phenomenon and existed primarily as an activity for adults. Thus men and women of the 1890s were the first and last generation of adults to learn how to cycle, since succeeding generations became familiar with their machines as children.[23] Active female cyclists also suffered scorn depending on their choice of riding apparel. In Europe and several of the larger American cities, "bloomers" were becoming increasingly fashionable, but in the Canadian west long skirts remained the accepted cycling dress for women until the close of the century.[24] For instance, a photograph of the prominent Edmonton sportswoman, Miss Calvert, depicts her standing with a drop-framed "safety" bicycle, wearing a full-length skirt, matching jacket, gloves and jaunty hat in 1897,[25] while the following extract from the Edmonton Bulletin reflects the unbending attitude of British Columbians towards the new 'rational dress' of women:

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[19] Harmond, p. 230.

[20] Glass _idem_. See also A. E. Cox, "A History of Sports in Canada 1868 - 1900," University of Alberta: Unpublished doctoral thesis, 1969, pp. 65-66, for a discussion of the use of "cushions" and "solids."

[21] Even transitional models, the so-called "high wheeled safeties," which placed the small wheel at the front of the machine in a steerable fork, were not altogether suitable for female cyclists. See Glass, pp. 8-10, for a detailed description of these types of bicycles.

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[22] J. McGurn, On Your Bicycle. An Illustrated History of Cycling (London: John Murray, 1987), p. 52.

[23] Harmond, p. 233.

[24] For comments, and several excellent cartoons, on this controversy, see A. Adburgham, A Punch History of Manners and Modes 1841 - 1940 (London: Hutchison of London, 1961), pp. 153-160, and the more scholarly analysis by M.A. Hall, "A History of Women's Sport in Canada Prior to World War I," University of Alberta: Unpublished masters thesis, 1968, pp. 89-91.

[25] Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. 17 April 1897. B6640.

> The citizens and police of Victoria, B.C. have decided that bloomers are not suitable ladies' street wear, even when worn as a bicycling costume, and have taken steps to enfore [sic] the decision. Miss Ethel Delmontis, an enthusiastic wheel woman, pretty and graceful, last week made her appearance in bloomer costume. The town came forth to gaze and for a moment the policemen were petrified with amazement. Then they were aroused to action and Miss Ethel received an official visitor who notified her that a repetition of her appearance in the objectionable costume would mean a police court summons on the charge of creating a disturbance on a public street.[26]

The nature of the report, including the exaggerated reactions of the policemen and citizens, and specifically the decision of the Bulletin editor to print such an article, helps to explain why the formation of cycling clubs was important for the psychological, legal and even physical, support of members. As Stephen Hardy points out, individuals who participated in new and sometimes unusual social activities needed the fellowship of groups, particularly when the activity was visible to the public, difficult to learn, and could have embarrassing consequences such as falls and spills. Clubs, therefore, provided strong emotional encouragement for pioneer sportsmen and sportswomen, and acted as enclaves for like-minded "deviants," helping to foster a subculture based on the enjoyment of a special activity.[27] Moreover, in a period when much of the general populace still resented cyclists, the group nature of club activities helped to prevent wanton attacks on individual members, particularly from "...country bumpkins [who] took great delight in thrusting sticks between the spokes of cyclists' wheels to knock them off their seats."[28] On a larger scale, bicycle clubs sought the reassurance and support that umbrella organizations could provide, and both the League of American Wheelmen (formed in 1880) and the Canadian Wheelmen's Association (formed in 1882), not only promoted new clubs, but actively campaigned to "ascertain, defend and protect the rights of wheelmen" and to "secure improvement in the condition of the public roads and highways."[29] The use of the word "wheelmen" is significant, for the literature of the C.W.A. seems to indicate that their focus was primarily on the activities of male cyclists.[30] Specific clubs, however, were quite amenable to female involvement, and it was the usual practice in Edmonton that "all ladies ... riding bicycles be admitted as honorary members of the club."[31] There is evidence that women formed their own cycling groups in other provinces, but it was rare for females to participate in bicycle races and their activities were usually restricted to touring.[32]

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[26] Bulletin 4 April 1895.
[27] Hardy, How Boston Played, p. 134.

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[28] E. A. Sloane, The New Complete Book of Bicycling (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), p. 271.

[29] These were two of the stated objects of the C.W.A. For a complete summary of the Constitution and By-Laws see the supplement to The Canadian Wheelman (Vol. XVI, No. 9. 16 March 1899). C. P. Hornung in Wheels Across America. A Pictorial Cavalcade Illustrating the Early Development of Vehicular Transport (New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1959), p. 256, says the successful push for road improvements was "one of the greatest achievements" of the American cycling body.

[30] The C.W.A. magazine was subtitled "A Fortnightly for Young Men."

[31] Bulletin 14 April 1895.

In terms of club activity, then, it is appropriate to provide a detailed narrative of developments in Edmonton. As has been indicated from the outset, the existing literature on the history of cycling in North America is sparse, and even the most recent overview of the topic pays scant attention to activities in western Canada. William Humber, in Freewheeling. The Story of the Bicycle in Canada, a synthesis of secondary sources and newspaper accounts, attempts to trace the spread of "bicycle fever" throughout the Dominion, but his efforts in describing early developments in the Northwest Territories suffer severely from an unnecessarily narrow focus on the town of Calgary, and a lack of original research.[33] The formation of the Calgary Bicycle Club in 1892 is mentioned as an important landmark in the town's cycling history, but an earlier manifestation of the club, dating back to 1887, is given less prominence.[34] Humber also claims that Calgary's supposed preference for the horse and cayuse hindered the town's acceptance of the bicycle and restricted a growth in club numbers.[35] The Calgary Herald, however, seemed satisfied that a membership of thirty eight in 1893 was "...not bad for a western bicycle club."[36] Furthermore, Humber's failure to give adequate consideration to the cycling activities of other towns in the vicinity of Calgary, namely Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and Edmonton, hinders an overall appreciation of sporting development in the area, particularly given the increasing frequency of inter-town cycling competitions, some of which were sponsored by the Canadian Wheelmen's Association.[37] Even David Glass, in a treatise on cycling in Alberta commissioned by the Reynolds-Alberta Museum, relies heavily on sources from Calgary, and it is only in a further companion piece that he briefly discusses the use of bicycles in late nineteenth century Edmonton.[38] The frustrating discovery which arises from the above review of literature is that the pioneer efforts of John Reid, Allan

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[32] Cox, pp. 379-380.

[33] W. Humber, Freewheeling. The Story of Bicycling in Canada (Erin, Ontario: The Boston Mills Press, 1986). Calgary is dealt with in Chapter 3. Only nine references, most of them related to developments in eastern Canada, are listed in the 'bibliography' on p. 160.

[34] See the Calgary Herald 28 January 1887, cited by Cox, p. 68 and J.E. Reid, "Sports and Games in Alberta Before 1900," University of Alberta: Unpublished masters thesis, 1969, p.

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[35] Humber, pp. 42-44. This notion was first put forward by Klassen, p. 2.

[36] Calgary Herald 3 May 1893. Cited by Klassen ibid, p. 4.

[37] Reid, pp. 18-20.

[38] See Glass, Alberta Usage, and D. J. Glass, "Cycling in the Province of Alberta, 1885 - 1960," Alberta Museums Review (Vol. 12, No. I, Spring, 1987), pp. 15 - 18. The former study provides an excellent overview of changes in bicycle technology, while the latter piece outlines the background to an exhibition staged at the Provincial Museum, Edmonton, in 1987.

Cox and Ian Jobling, who all mention cycling in their general surveys of sport in Canada, have yet to be surpassed.[39] More than twenty years have elapsed since they conducted their original research, and yet little of substance has been added to their findings, despite rather sanctimonious calls for a more incisive approach to the study of sport history.[40] Perhaps the most serious criticism of previous work, however, is the fact that the existence of the North Star Bicycle Club, formed in 1896, has never been acknowledged in any secondary source dealing with the history of sport in Edmonton. It is clear, then, that a detailed examination of the development of cycling in Edmonton is long overdue, and if such an enterprise is to be comprehensive it must consider the role of the North Star club. Accordingly, the following chapters not only trace the history of bicycle use in Edmonton, but they focus on the membership and activities of the town's second, and more exclusive, cycling group - the North Star Bicycle Club.

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[39] Reid, pp. 18-22, Cox, pp. 56-70, 379-380, and I. Jobling, "Sport in Nineteenth Century Canada: The Effects of Technological Changes on its Development," University of Alberta: Unpublished doctoral thesis, 1970, passim.

[40] See, for example, M. Mott, "Canadian Sports History: Some Comments to Urban Historians," Urban History Review (Vol. XII, No. 2, October, 1983), pp. 25-30 and Morrow, pp. 67-79.

CHAPTER III

"ATHLETES AND CYCLISTS":

Early Developments, 1890-1894

In June 1893, the Edmonton Bulletin noted that:

> A bicycle club was organized in Edmonton on Monday evening with G.R.F. Kirkpatrick honorary president; P.L. McNamara president and J. Stovel captain.[1]

No location for the inaugural meeting was given, no other members were listed, and indeed no advance notice for the gathering was printed in the town's semi-weekly newspaper. If the meeting was advertised, it must have been by posters placed in store windows and pinned to trees, or by word of mouth. The brevity of the report is also surprising, for if this was the first bicycle club formed in Edmonton, one would expect the Bulletin to adopt a more informative approach. Space limitations may have prevented the insertion of further details, but the single sentence report is puzzling for it neither confirms nor denies the notion that the formation of a club for cyclists was an unusual or an unexpected occurrence. It is also reasonable to assume that in such a small town cyclists would have been well known to each other and conspicuous within the community. Patrick Leonard McNamara had already demonstrated his enthusiasm for "the wheel" by taking part in the Northwest Territories championship in 1892, and other citizens were fascinated with the mobility offered by the Reverend Dean's railway velocipede.[2] An early form of the bicycle, the "boneshaker," had gained wide popularity in British Columbia during the summer of 1869,[3] and there was a bicycle agency at Rankin and Allan's dry goods store in Calgary from 1886.[4] David Glass, a curatorial assistant at the Reynolds-Alberta Museum, has even identified a rare Coventry Rotary adult tricycle of English manufacture in a photograph of the Eau Claire and Bow River Lumber Company office, which was situated in Calgary between 1886 and 1889.[5] Thus, while there is no documentary evidence that high-wheeled "ordinaries" were ever owned or ridden by citizens in Edmonton, it is clear that bicycles and other similar machines were available to those people of wealth who desired a new mode of transport. There are scattered references to bicycles in Edmonton prior to the meeting in June 1893, notably E. Taylor's victory at the Dominion Day sports in 1890, but the Bulletin treats them in a matter-of-fact manner, with little comment on the type of machine, or on the cyclists who rode them.[6] Additionally, items in the newspaper during this early period tend to stress speed and competitive racing rather than the more mundane aspects of bicycle use, and so perceptions of cycling activity may be somewhat distorted.[7]

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[1] Bulletin 15 June 1893.

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[2] Supra p. 20.

[3] British Colonist 9 March 1869. Cited by Cox, p. 57.

[4] Klassen, pp. 2-3.

[5] Glass, Alberta Usage, pp. 95-96.

[6] The prize for the winner of the race was a bicycle lamp. Bulletin 5 July 1890. An "E. Taylor" later became vice-president of the Calgary Bicycle Club. Calgary Weekly

In western Canada, the initial enthusiasm for cycling probably stemmed from newly arrived settlers who had already witnessed the beginnings of a "bicycle craze" in other parts of the country. Some may have brought bicycles with them, or had them especially imported, as did James Stovel, who received delivery of "... a racing bicycle weighing only 24 pounds" in the week following the formation of the club.[8] As noted previously, there was already at least one agency in Calgary in 1886, and with the expansion of the bicycle market after the introduction of the "safety" in the 1890s, it appears that several hardware stores and other merchants in the town began to stock bicycles. P.W.F. Godenrath, for example, had a "thriving" cycle business as early as 1892, offering an extensive range of models and a wide selection of bicycle accessories such as lanterns, tool bags, bells and cyclometers.[9] But the demand for bicycles was fuelled not only by the availability of machines, but by significant advances in communications technology which exposed isolated

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Herald 26 April 1893.

[7] For example, a telegraphic message from Winnipeg simply stated that "A boy named Johnson has cut the bicycle record to 2:06." Bulletin 26 September 1892.

[8] Bulletin 22 June 1893.

[9] Klassen idem.

communities to the direct influence of more established metropolitan centres. In this sense, the by-products of industrialization - improved mail and telegraph connections, the growth of print media, and an extensive railway network - and their impact on the attitudes of a fledgling society, cannot be underestimated.[10] In the case of cycling, Edmontonians, like other western Canadians, were quickly informed of developments across the country, and the existence of bicycle clubs, news of cycling events, and the increasing social acceptance of the new machine in large cities cannot have gone unnoticed. The railway spur from Calgary to South Edmonton, completed in 1891, was a particularly important link in this regard for it ensured the regular and prompt delivery of freight to businesses, and facilitated easier and more frequent travel between Edmonton and other distant points on the line such as Winnipeg, Toronto and Montreal. Well-to-do citizens in the west, therefore, who now became accustomed to spending summer vacations with their relatives in eastern Canada, could witness the activities of large bicycle clubs on a firsthand basis. Photographic evidence demonstrates the high public profile of these clubs and there is little doubt that their organization and style left a strong impression in the minds of visitors.[11] One did not have to be a member of a club to be a cyclist, of course, but as Paul Voisey notes, the enormous growth in institutions during this period "... sprang in part from a progressive ethos that sought greater efficiency in human affairs through planning, organization, and bureaucracy" and the formation of numerous social and sporting bodies in Edmonton reflects the impact of such influences.[12]

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[10] Betke, "Urban Community," pp. 23-24. See also Metcalfe, p. 51. Voisey, pp. 23-25 adopts a more cautious approach to metropolitan influences.

Apart from ameliorating feelings of isolation, the Calgary-South Edmonton railway line, completed in 1891, also altered the nature of sporting contests in the area. For although Carl Betke argues that the separateness of South Edmonton "in the artificial realm of sport" was somewhat exaggerated, it is apparent that South Edmonton's importance as Edmonton's major athletic rival diminished once a rail link was established.[13] In particular, the Queen's Birthday holiday in May and the celebration of Dominion Day in July, became important occasions for the promotion of agricultural, civic and sporting events, and the railway enabled both spectators and participants to attend in large numbers. The first train from Calgary arrived at the South Edmonton terminus on 27 July 1891 and the twice weekly service quickly gained the support of a public who had tired of the tedious five day stage coach journey.[14] Fast and relatively reliable steam trains could now cover the two hundred miles separating the two towns in less than eleven hours, and long weekends that resulted from the declaration of legal holidays were a boon to sports committees and the hotel trade alike. Even before the railway spur was officially opened, "a large number of railroaders from the nearest camps, out for a day's holiday" made the 1891 Dominion Day celebration a success, and participating athletes spent weeks "... getting up their muscles" for the games and foot races.[15] Unofficial 'holidays' also became increasingly frequent as individual sporting groups from both Calgary and Edmonton began to foster more regular contests. For example, three weeks after the rail link was established, a "large crowd of spectators" watched Calgary defeat Edmonton in a game of baseball on a Tuesday afternoon.[16] Significantly, the Calgary team had arrived by train the day before, and the Edmonton club had contributed one hundred dollars towards their expenses.[17] By the following year, it was common for the station agent to grant a reduced rate, usually a single fare, to those passengers travelling to or from Edmonton for a special sporting event.[18] Smaller towns, such as South Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan, could not compete with the greater prize money and the range of events offered by their more populous neighbours, and their significance as sporting rivals soon diminished. By 1893, the Edmonton Sports Committee displayed a clear preference for competition with Calgary rather than South Edmonton, thus establishing a tradition which was to last until Strathcona amalgamated with the city of Edmonton in 1912.[19]

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[11] Bicycle clubs were first formed in Montreal during 1876 and in Toronto during 1881. Cox, p. 58. Photographs in Humber, *passim*., indicate the visual effectiveness of bicycle "runs" through city streets.

[12] Voisey, p. 170. See also Betke, "Urban Community," p. 40 who considers "... increasing organization and the myriad forms of cooperation which went with it" as the most significant development in Edmonton during the 1890s.

[13] Betke *ibid*., pp. 39-40. Hockey competitions may be considered one exception in this regard.

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[14] The line became so popular that many citizens believed a daily service was justified. Calgary Weekly Herald 12 April 1893.

[15] Bulletin 4 July 1891.

[16] Several foot races were also held in the evening. Bulletin 15 August 1891.

[17] Bulletin 8 August 1891.

Long before the railway line had been extended from Calgary to South Edmonton it was a commonly held belief that the spur would continue across the river to the older and more established community of Edmonton. A feeling of optimism pervaded the town and efforts to draw attention to the vast potential of the area were coordinated for the most part by the Board of Trade, which had been formed in 1889.[20] The Bulletin was also eager to promote development and, as R.A. Christenson points out in his analysis, the newspaper took great pains to assure its readers that a rise in land values, a growth in farm production, and an overall increase in wealth would be the direct result of a railway connection.[21] On the strength of such attitudes, farmers, merchants and professional men began to arrive in Edmonton in search of new opportunities and new prosperity. Several came directly from as far away as New Brunswick, such as the dental surgeon Alexander Hooper Goodwin and the physician John Darley Harrison.[22] Others, such as the bank manager George Robert Foster Kirkpatrick, and the barristers Nicholas Dubois Beck and Pat McNamara, simply left friends and family in Calgary and quickly established their own businesses or professions at the end of the railway line, the "Gateway to the North."[23] Significantly, all the men mentioned above became active cyclists in Edmonton, as well as being involved in a variety of other sports. In 1892, the twenty-four year old Goodwin, for example, was active in tennis, cricket and baseball,[24] while the youthful bachelor McNamara became a prominent competitor in lacrosse, footracing and baseball.[25] McNamara, in particular, exerted a strong influence on the development of lacrosse in Edmonton and his contacts in Calgary ensured the success of inter-community contests.[26] It is crucial to recognize, however, that it was only a particular group of citizens who had the time to be involved in such a large array of summer sports and it is clear that professional men such as lawyers and doctors, as well as several merchants, dominated the organization of athletic events and sporting clubs during this period. Not only did executive meetings, regular practice and Saturday afternoon matches take up a great deal of time, but mid-week contests with Calgary became increasingly common. It was only those engaged in a suitable occupation or profession who could afford the necessary time away from work. If other community members, especially the labouring class, wanted to pursue sporting interests, the only time available to do so was in the evenings or on public holidays. In addition, nearly all clubs charged an annual fee, ranging from one dollar for membership of the cricket club, to ten dollars for subscription to the curling club,[27] and competitors in the Queen's Birthday and Dominion Day sports even had to pay an entrance fee for each event.[28] Given that the school principal in Edmonton only earned about twenty-five dollars per week, the cost of several memberships in a variety of sporting clubs must have been prohibitive for those on a low wage and with limited time for leisure.

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[18] For examples, see the Bulletin 13 June 1892, 15 August 1892 and 26 September 1892.
[19] Bulletin 1 May 1893.
[20] MacGregor, p. 106.

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[21] Christenson, pp. 273-280.

[22] Goodwin arrived in Edmonton during August, 1891. Bulletin 1 August 1891. Harrison, educated at the University of New Brunswick and practicing surgeon at the Montreal General Hospital, arrived in the following year. Bulletin 26 May 1892.

[23] Kirkpatrick was given a banquet by prominent Calgary citizens prior to his departure. Bulletin 5 September 1891. Beck was originally from Ontario, but had been practicing law with a Calgary firm three years before his arrival in Edmonton. Bulletin 8 August 1891. McNamara came from a well known family in Calgary and set up his Edmonton practice in 1891. Bulletin 30 May 1891.

[24] See respective references in the Bulletin 16 April 1892, 19 May 1892 and 15 August 1892.

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[25] See respective references in the Bulletin 23 May 1892, 4 July 1892 and 29 September 1892.

[26] McNamara had initially been a member of the lacrosse club in Calgary. Bulletin 30 May 1891. At the first meeting of the Edmonton lacrosse club, held in Beck and McNamara's law office, McNamara was elected secretary and signed up seventy-six members within a week of the gathering. Bulletin 23 May 1892. When a series of games against Calgary was organized later in the year, McNamara played the violin at a function to raise funds for the athletes, and captained the team as well. See the Bulletin 26 September 1892 and 29 September 1892. When Edmonton was defeated by Calgary, McNamara requested "... every young man who can handle a crosse to turn out to the practice at 6.30 every morning on the race course" in an effort to ensure victory in the next contest. Bulletin 6 October 1892.

It was in this context that Edmonton's first bicycle club was formed in 1893. As previously indicated, a bicycle race was part of the Dominion Day program of sports in 1890, but no further bicycle races are recorded in the Edmonton press until three years later. In 1892, Calgary cyclists had once again become active after a brief hiatus, and in the following year the Calgary Weekly Herald announced the appearance of "the festive 'bike'" in the streets of the town as an early sign of spring.[29] It is also worthwhile to note that soon after its annual meeting in April, the Calgary Bicycle Club decided to hold bicycle races as part of an agricultural fair and invitations were sent out "...as far east as Winnipeg and also to the Coast."[30] Presumably, the cycling fraternity in Edmonton was also encouraged to attend the four day event in June and the challenge from Calgary may well have been the catalyst which inspired cyclists in Edmonton to form a club. Other sporting bodies had already organized for the short summer season, and the relatively late formation of a new club in the month of June reflects the importance of the invitation from Calgary in fostering Edmonton's latent enthusiasm for the bicycle. Furthermore, in an obvious response to the "craze" now beginning to sweep across the prairies, the organizing committee for the Queen's Birthday sports (none of whom were cyclists), included a bicycle race amongst the events scheduled for May 24.[31] To the undoubted chagrin of the local onlookers, Robert P. Pettipiece won the half mile race and the prize donated by M. Connors, returning to his home across the river in South Edmonton.[32] In 1894 Pettipiece was to become the founding editor and publisher of the South Edmonton News, but his later effort to promote cycling in a town of only five hundred people was to little avail.[33]

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[27] See respective references in the Bulletin 2 May 1891 and 9 May 1891.
[28] Bulletin 27 June 1891.
[29] Calgary Weekly Herald 29 March 1893.
[30] Calgary Weekly Herald 3 May 1893.

In Calgary, meanwhile, "no sports of any description" took place on the Queen's Birthday, but the community displayed eager anticipation for the June exhibition where an unprecedented five thousand dollars was to be offered in prize money.[34] As the newly elected president of the Edmonton club, McNamara was the town's only cyclist to attend the four day fair, although several other athletes caught the train to Calgary with him.[35] George Kirkpatrick, manager of the Imperial Bank, treasurer of the town council, and honorary president of the bicycle club, had departed Edmonton on the morning after the club was inaugurated and did not return from his vacation to eastern Canada until later in August.[36] In his absence, therefore, the attention of the Bulletin was focused on McNamara and two extensive reports on his activities subsequently appear in the Edmonton newspaper. The first article, published during the course of the fair, was attributed to the Calgary Tribune and reprinted as follows:

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[31] Bulletin 4 May 1893.

[32] No other entries in the event were listed. Bulletin 25 May 1893.

[33] The first issue of the weekly newspaper was published in November 1894. A plea for cyclists to form a club and join the C.W.A. seems to have been ignored. South Edmonton News 18 July 1895.

> Yesterday evening some person altered the gearing of Mr. P. McNamara's bicycle, thus ruining the machine for the races. At a meeting of the club last night it was decided to place the matter in the hands of the police, and the offender will be prosecuted if discovered. In the meantime Mr. McNamara has purchased another bicycle.[37]

Thus not only were bicycles becoming increasingly sophisticated with complicated gearing systems, but the prestige and prize money at stake in racing events encouraged a more professional attitude by cyclists as well. Interference with a bicycle was to be treated as a criminal offence and not a harmless prank, and McNamara's determination not to be thwarted is reflected in his immediate decision to purchase another machine. The second article, a lengthy report on McNamara's overall success in Calgary, reveals that he won three silver medals in individual events, and one silver medal in the firemen's drill competition. In the four bicycle races staged, McNamara was placed third in the mile handicap, and came second in the quarter mile sprint, but as the Bulletin sympathetically points out:

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[34] Calgary Weekly Herald 31 May 1893. By comparison, prize money of one thousand dollars was offered at the Dominion Day sports in Edmonton. Bulletin 26 June 1893.

[35] Bulletin 19 June 1893.

[36] Bulletin 8 June 1893 and 12 June 1893.

[37] Bulletin 26 June 1893.

> Mr. McNamara rode the bicycle races on a wheel that he had only just purchased and therefore was unaccustomed to, his own having been tampered with by some person or persons unknown, a day or two before the race. All the events were contested while he was suffering from a severe cut in one foot received in the lacrosse match.[38]

It is possible that the injury was more serious than the newspaper indicates, for McNamara played no part in the athletic contests scheduled for the Dominion Day public holiday in Edmonton.[39] As a key figure among cyclists in the town, McNamara was probably expected to oversee the organization of the bicycle events in the program. However, his injury, and his return to Edmonton only days before the July celebration took place, seem to explain the hasty cancellation of the cycling races.[40] In the following weeks, McNamara recovered his health and his penchant for active pursuits, although his business affairs appeared to suffer a set-back. Up until this time, McNamara and Beck had been in partnership as the town's solicitors, but in October, 1893, they terminated their agreement and established separate practices.[41] Given McNamara's extensive involvement in sporting activities, it is conceivable that his extended absences from work were a concern not only to his partner but to his clients as well.[42]

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[38] Bulletin 3 July 1893. For a brief summary of the other cycling events see McLennan, p. 387.

[39] The only McNamara listed among the participants was Dan, the brother of Patrick. Bulletin 3 July 1893.

As the population of Edmonton continued to expand, other sporting and social clubs were formed. The freezing temperatures of winter did little to deter citizens from participating in regular skating carnivals and curling bonspiels, and the formation of an athletic association in November, 1893, testifies to an abiding interest in rigorous physical activity. Dumb-bells, clubs, boxing gloves, and rowing machines were among the "athletic appliances" made available to members, and a special lease arrangement ensured that Robertson's hall could be used by the association on every night of the week except Sunday.[43] Other cultural groups also became established during this period of rapid growth and the formation of organizations such as the Edmonton Orchestral Society reflect an increasing degree of sophistication and social diversity within the community.[44]

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[40] "The bicycle races and the slow race were the only events that did not come off as announced in the programme." Ibid.

[41] Bulletin 21 September 1893.

[42] It was only in July, 1893, following a resolution of the bar association,that all law offices in Edmonton were required to close at one o'clock on Saturday afternoons. Bulletin 13 July 1893.

By April, 1894, several sporting clubs had already met to plan their activities for the short summer. Although there was once again no advance notice of the bicycle club meeting, subsequent reports in the Bulletin do give a strong impression that cyclists in the town were better organized and their activities more worthy of newspaper coverage than they were in the previous year. In this regard, it is worthwhile to note that the profile of the club must have been enhanced by the election of two prominent citizens, James McDonald and Dr. John Harrison, to the respective offices of president and vice president, even though George Kirkpatrick's position as "honorary" president was apparently dispensed with.[45] Similarly, the decision of the club to hold regular monthly meetings in the council chambers can be perceived as not only a natural progression to more commodious surrounds but as a conscious attempt to legitimize the actions of the group.[46] The Bulletin itself, perhaps in recognition of these changes, now began to refer to the Edmonton Bicycle Club in capitalized letters, as cycling continued to receive a greater prominence in its pages.[47] Of even greater significance, however, is the fact that at the first meeting of the bicycle club for the year, "J.E. Graham was recommended for the office of local consul."[48] Such a statement is noteworthy, because it clearly indicates that the Edmonton Bicycle Club had, or wished to have, some affiliation with the Ontario-based Canadian Wheelmen's Association. According to the C.W.A. by-laws, clubs were to recommend a member for the position of local consul, and the appointment was to be ratified by the Chief Consul for each district. ("For the purpose of Association work," Canada was divided into geographical districts, and Edmonton fell within the Northwest District, which included Calgary, Medicine Hat and Regina.[49]) The local consul, once appointed, was to:

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[43] Bulletin 13 November 1893.

[44] The Edmonton Orchestral Society was first formed in 1893. Bulletin 9 November 1893.

[45] Bulletin 9 April 1894. McDonald was a real estate agent, treasurer of the Board of Trade and an active participant and administrator in the curling club. Harrison was one of four physicians in the town and an office bearer of the athletics association. Bulletin passim.

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[46] Correspondence between McNamara, the newly elected secretary-treasurer of the club, and A.G. Randall, the council clerk, seems to confirm an arrangement for use of the council chambers. See the Bulletin 19 April 1894, and Town Secretary's Papers, Outgoing Correspondence, City Archives: R.G.E. Class I, 24 April 1894, p. 495.

[47] Substantial reports appear in the Bulletin 21 May 1894, 28 May 1894 and 7 June 1894.

[48] Bulletin 9 April 1894.

> ... acquire and give information as to roads, hotels, laws, etc., in their localities to members of the Association calling upon them personally or by letter, when stamp is enclosed for reply. Keep the district officers informed from time to time of all information of interest to wheelmen by reports. Perform such duties as the said officers may require of them and generally promote the welfare of the Association.[50]

John Edward Graham, therefore, was to act as a local ambassador not just for the club, but for the Association as well. While Edmonton may have been physically isolated from other parts of Canada, it is clear that trans-continental organizations such as the C.W.A. could exert an influence on the form and function of affiliated clubs.

Another indication that cycling had a firm foothold in the community was the purveyance of bicycle accessories by businesses in Edmonton. The machine itself had not yet been advertised for sale in the town, but a selection of cycling apparel was readily available. William Thomas Henry, who was born on Prince Edward Island in 1872, and had worked in Calgary for three years before setting up a "Gent's Furnishing Store" in Edmonton in 1893, was the first to advertise his stock. "For wheelmen we have a nice line of Bicycle Suits and Jerseys" was a phrase that appeared in six consecutive issues of the Bulletin,[51] while the Hudson's Bay Company offered a more extensive range of items, including "special lines of Bicycle and Tennis shoes," and "Suits, Caps, Jerseys, Shirts, Belts and Stockings" for "Athletes and Cyclists."[52] Most goods now arrived in Edmonton by rail and much of the advertising was geared to whatever stock became available. Many stores were quite small in size and therefore few goods were carried over from one season to the next.

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[49] The Canadian Wheelman, By-laws, Article II.
[50] Ibid.

By May, 1894, cycling had become such a novel spectacle that "quite a large crowd" turned out to the Edmonton race track to watch "seven or eight competitors" in a series of bicycle races over various distances. Even though sports were being held for the Queen's Birthday on the other side of the river, these four time trials and handicap events were extremely well organized and strongly patronized by spectators and officials. The emphasis was clearly on speed and setting records, for there was no entry fee and no prizes awarded.[53] The Bulletin noted that "particularly fast time was made" and duly recorded F. Ross as the winner of the mile race, McNamara as winner of the two handicap events, and John Graham as victor in the half mile open. Winning times, to the nearest quarter of a second, were noted by the town jeweller, Emmanuel Raymer, with James

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[51] Bulletin 26 April 1894 - 14 May 1894.
[52] Bulletin 7 May 1894 - 14 May 1894.
[53] Bulletin 21 May 1894 and 28 May 1894.

McDonald acting as the starter and H.C. Taylor as the referee.[54] Within two weeks, the club had decided to have weekly race meetings consisting of quarter mile, half mile and one mile events, with additional long distance competitions scheduled at regular intervals,[55] and it was expected that these would be "a leading feature" of the forthcoming Dominion Day celebration.[56]

In 1894, the Dominion Day public holiday fell on a Monday, and in a lengthy two column report the Bulletin was lavish in its praise of the quality of events and the behaviour of the crowd. According to the article, fine weather and a "liberal" prize list had "brought together the largest crowd ever seen in Edmonton" and an estimated three and a half thousand spectators witnessed the series of bicycle races held in the afternoon.[57] The results were recorded as follows:

BICYCLE RACES

1 mile, 2 entries.
    P.L. McNamara, 1st, time 2:58 1/2.
    J.J. McIntyre, 2nd.

1/2 mile, 5 entries.
    J.E. Graham, 1st, 1:23 1/6.
    Dr. Goodwin, 2nd.

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[54] Other prominent citizens such as councillor J.A. McDougall, Dr. Ibbotson, and the mayor, Matt McCauley, were initially slated to act as judges, but their attendance was not confirmed. C.f., ibid.

[55] Bulletin 7 June 1894.

[56] Bulletin 21 June 1894.

[57] Bulletin 5 July 1894.

5 miles, 3 entries.
P.L. McNamara, 1st, time 17:17.
J.J. McIntyre, 2nd.
J.E. Graham, 3rd.

It is interesting to note that while the winners of other events received their prize in the form of a cheque, only cyclists were presented with medals.[58] The use of medallions as prizes suggests that the Edmonton Bicycle Club was keen to consolidate its reputation with the C.W.A., for the Canada-wide cycling body enforced strict rules of amateurism among its affiliated members. According to the C.W.A. by-laws, a cyclist could be expelled from the Association by "Selling, pawning, exchanging, bartering, or otherwise turning into cash or in any manner realizing cash upon any prize won by him," and this must have been a strong incentive for cyclists in Edmonton not to accept cash prizes.[59] The relatively small number of competitors in the three events indicates the dominance of bicycle races by club members, but it does not necessarily offer a true reflection of the level of cycling activity in the town. W.T. Henry and the Hudson's Bay Company would hardly have procured and advertised a wide range of cycling equipment in order to service the needs of a handful of club members, and it is reasonable to assume that the recreational use of the bicycle was becoming more widespread. In later years, it is clear that spouses of club members also owned bicycles, and the matter-of-fact treatment of "wheelwomen" in the subsequent issues of the Bulletin suggests that female cyclists may have been prevalent. In addition, it seems that the specialist racing bicycle was in vogue even at this early stage, and it is possible that only wealthier enthusiasts, such as the lawyer McNamara and the dentist Goodwin, found the cost of a second machine, suited to racing conditions, less than prohibitive. Whatever the case may have been, by 1895 cycling in Edmonton was no longer a novel activity; it was a significant part of community life.

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[58] C.f., ibid., and Bulletin 2 July 1894.
[59] The Canadian Wheelman, By-laws, Article V.

CHAPTER IV

"THE BOYS HAVE ORDERED NEW WHEELS":

The 'Bicycle Question' in Edmonton, 1895

With several changes in format and general appearance during the early 1890s, including the introduction of larger type and an increasing emphasis on display advertisements, the Edmonton Bulletin began to match its initial reputation for "fair dealing and plain speaking" with improved methods of newspaper production. Proud of the role that his newspaper had played in the growth of Edmonton and the surrounding district, Frank Oliver installed a new steam plant to run the presses in November, 1893, and erected a new building, the 'Bulletin Block,' to house his flourishing business in the following year.[1] The "Honorable Frank Oliver," elected to the Northwest Territories Assembly in 1891, was sometimes absent from Edmonton, but until the pressure of public life forced him to relinquish sole ownership of the newspaper in 1898, he continued to dominate the outlook and policies of the Bulletin.[2] This is important to note, for not only did Oliver's high public profile enhance the prestige of the town, but his political influence added legitimacy to the editorials and reports which appeared in the newspaper.

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[1] The steam plant was located in the basement, while the offices of the Bulletin and W.T. Henry's "Gent's Furnishings" occupied the first floor. The second storey was later rented out as legal offices. See W.S. Waddell, "The Honorable Frank Oliver," University of Alberta: Unpublished masters thesis, 1950, p. 231, and an 1895 photograph of the building, Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. B4II9.

[2] Ibid., pp. 282-283.

In this context it should be recognized that "news" took a variety of forms in the Bulletin, as it did in other prairie newspapers. Brief telegraphic despatches provided a link with the outside world, and reports from nearby locations such as Wetaskiwin, Fort Saskatchewan and Red Deer appeared on a semi-regular basis. Occasional items of correspondence were published, and lengthy editorials dealing with the economic development of the area gave Oliver the ideal opportunity to expound his political views. Dinners and speeches made on behalf of the Board of Trade were often featured, and the actions of the town council were reported in detail. The great bulk of news items, however, consisted of short anonymous paragraphs dealing with local activities. Much of this type of coverage seemed to consist of abridged reports submitted by the multitude of clubs and societies in the town, and it is clear that the pages of the newspaper remained the most suitable means for communicating news even in a small community. Of particular interest, though, are those instances where the editor of the Bulletin enlarges these brief reports with an opinion or comment on the activity. In the realm of sport, teams and the results of matches were usually announced without discussion, and it was common for the election of club office bearers, the setting of membership fees and the location of meetings to be noted without comment. On several occasions, however, special attention is given to the development of sport, and in 1895 there is a predominance of editorial remarks concerning the activity of cycling which deserve detailed examination.

Following a winter during which a new hockey rink was built in Edmonton,[3] interest in sport was actively encouraged by the town's newspaper. Defeat by Calgary in hockey, and a subsequent challenge by the Calgary football team, led the Bulletin to publish several exhortations, urging the "boys" of the town to "wake up" and not to lose the next thing they entered into.[4] Recognizing that Edmonton lagged behind Calgary and Medicine Hat in terms of cycling facilities, the Bulletin also recommended the development of a multi-purpose sports ground. The following paragraph, despite the often clumsy expression, thus represents a significant stance by the editor of the Bulletin and reflects the crucial role of the newspaper in fostering recreational activities.

> Commence to form boys your different athletic clubs for the summer. Some are advocating that all interested take shares for the purpose of purchasing and making suitable grounds with a bicycle track, and that all the different games can be played on. Such grounds are available now and this would be the time to get them. If the

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[3] Bulletin 29 November 1894.
[4] Bulletin 14 March 1895.

> town are laying aside a park or recreation ground in a convenient place, where the young men after their day's work can reach those grounds might be arranged satisfactory for the different clubs. But now is the time to talk over and arrange.[5]

Furthermore, as Susan Markham astutely observes in her comparison of Edmonton with other prairie communities, the push for parks and sports grounds was an important aspect of western Canadian "boosterism" well into the next decade, and it is not surprising that Frank Oliver should be the advocate of such an enterprise.[6] To this end, sporting events, as well as facilities, were promoted, a point well made by Paul Voisey in his study of Vulcan.[7]

Cycling continued to receive the encouragement of the press in the early months of 1895 and even before the bicycle club held its annual meeting on Good Friday, the Bulletin seemed pleased to declare that "Bicycling will be all the go this summer. Quite a lot of the boys have ordered new wheels."[8] In addition, an April advertisement for the Queen's Birthday sports (which appeared in both the Bulletin and the South Edmonton News) listed bicycle races as a feature event,[9] and in contrast to previous years, the date, time and location of the club's first meeting was announced in the Bulletin.[10] The following lengthy report of the business conducted was published several days later:

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[5] Ibid.

[6] S.E. Markham, "The Development of Parks and Playgrounds in Selected Canadian Prairie Cities: 1880-1930," University of Alberta: Unpublished doctoral thesis, 1988. p. V.

[7] Voisey, p. 60.

[8] Bulletin 4 April 1895.

[9] C.f., the Bulletin 1 April 1895 and the South Edmonton News 4 April 1895.

> A meeting of the Bicycle club was held on Friday evening last in the town hall. The following officers were appointed: Hon. president, S.S. Taylor; president, J. Graham; secretary and treasurer, A.H. Goodwin; J. Graham was recommended as consul. The initiation fee was placed at $2.00. It was resolved that all ladies in Edmonton riding bicycles be admitted as honorary members of the club. A part of the programme of races to take place on the 24th of May, will be half mile, one mile, five miles, and three mile team race, other races to be fixed later on. The secretary was instructed to write to Calgary, Lethbridge, McLeod and Medicine Hat, inviting them to take part in the races to be held on the 24th May.[11]

The lacrosse club also held its annual meeting on the afternoon of the same day, and although Pat McNamara, the driving force of both the lacrosse and cycling clubs from their inception, was unexpectedly delayed in Montreal, it is obvious that the two sporting groups could now organize themselves effectively in his absence.[12] It is also noteworthy that despite several references by the Bulletin to cycling as an activity for the "boys," the club specifically acknowledged the activities of female cyclists and admitted them as honorary members. Moreover, in a separate news item, published at the same time as the bicycle club report, it was recorded that:

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[10] Bulletin 11 April 1895.

[11] Bulletin 15 April 1895

[12] McNamara returned to Edmonton on Easter Monday. His delay was caused by the sudden illness of his father. Bulletin 22 April 1895.

> Messrs Goodwin and Raymer who are agents here for the Brantford bicycles disposed of four machines last week. They are expecting four more shortly, amongst them a lady's wheel, and they are all ordered.[13]

Like the Bulletin, the South Edmonton News was less than enthusiastic about the involvement of women in athletic pursuits and its mocking of "the giddy ladies" who proposed to form a women's football team was typical of prevailing attitudes.[14] Both newspapers were particularly galled that sportswomen would consider wearing "objectionable" bloomer costumes, but references to bicycle sales and club activities indicate that women remained keen cyclists despite disparagement by the press.[15] The fact that Alexander Goodwin and Emmanuel Raymer are listed as bicycle agents is also significant, for this is the first evidence of the sale of bicycles in Edmonton. Presumably these two citizens, a dentist and a jeweller respectively, took on the agency not just as a service to the cycling fraternity, but as an additional business venture. It was in their interests, then, to continue the promotion of cycling activities not just within the club but throughout the wider community. Furthermore, the difficulty of matching supply with demand must have increased the prestige of those people who did own bicycles, for the conspicuous display of a new machine could not have gone unnoticed in such a small town.

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[13] Bulletin 15 April 1895.
[14] South Edmonton News 18 April 1895.
[15] C.f., ibid and supra pp. 24-25.

Indeed, the Bulletin monitored the increasing use of the bicycle in Edmonton and despite previous statements in support of cycling, by late April the newspaper believed the "craze" was almost out of hand. Up until this time, the horse had endured no real competition as a means of transport, and so when a bicycle and rider caused havoc by frightening a team of horses attached to a buggy in an Edmonton street, the editor of the Bulletin felt compelled to express his opinion in an uncharacteristically lengthy report:

> This accident brings up in forcible fashion the bicycle question, which has become serious in many large towns. The number of bicycles in Edmonton is very large this season, and is steadily increasing. That they frighten horses is unquestionable. It is impossible that horses generally running on the range or on a farm can become accustomed on short notice to the strange combination of man - or woman - and vehicle. A runaway horse is a danger not only to his driver but to the public. The streets are for the use of bicycles as well as of other vehicles, but wheelmen should consider the danger to which they expose drivers of horses and the public generally by a sudden appearance close to a horse and rig. Just as horsemen are not allowed to ride or drive to endanger or discommode the public. So wheelmen should be compelled to give horses a wide berth in passing and to give proper warning of their approach, and besides should be limited to a moderate speed when on a well travelled street in town. The tendency of any person or persons to

> monopolize either the street or the sidewalk should be kept in check.[16]

In some ways, the debate over the 'bicycle question' can be construed as a watershed in Edmonton's cycling history, for it brings into focus a variety of pertinent issues. As Robert Smith explains, the conflict between proponents of the horse and supporters of the bicycle was a matter of genuine dispute in the 1890s, and as one anonymous contemporary source quoted by Smith claimed, it seemed that "... all America was divided into two classes of people - those who rode bicycles and those who did not."[17] Even though it is true that the horse could offer independence of movement comparable to the bicycle, by 1895 the "safety" offered some advantage at a financial level and was often cheaper to own than a horse. As Richard Harmond points out, a good quality mare in America cost around one hundred and fifty dollars in the mid-1890s, not including the additional monthly expenses for upkeep.[18] With a growing national network of independent bicycle agencies that could guarantee sales of new machines at a set price of less than one hundred and twenty-five dollars, regardless of freight costs, the contention that people in the most moderate circumstances could afford a bicycle seems valid.[19] In fact, it is on the basis of comparisons in price that Harmond has characterized the bicycle as "a 'democratic' vehicle that crossed class lines, ... encouraged wide recreational participation, and stimulated competitive interests."[20] People recognized that they could possess a means of recreation and transportation which surpassed the horse and trap of the well-to-do. After all, asserts Harmond:

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[16] Bulletin 22 April 1895. (Grammatical errors appear in the original text.)

[17] R.S. Smith, A Social History of the Bicycle. Its Early Life and Times in America (New York: American Heritage Press, 1972.), p. x.

[18] Harmond, p. 235.

> ... should a rich man purchase a safety, he was no better then anyone else on the road. He had to exert the same physical effort to move his machine and face the same road conditions as other riders, and, at a distance or from the rear, his expensive new wheel was indistinguishable from a poor man's second hand vehicle.[21]

But did the ownership of bicycles in Edmonton admit rich and poor alike to a new social class, a class which Harmond says was based on the "freemasonry of the wheel"?[22] In 1892, at an auction held in the stable of Edmonton's first mayor, Matt McCauley, thirty horses had been sold at an average price of fifty dollars and better quality stock fetched just over one hundred dollars.[23] However, it was not until the middle of the decade that an excess of supply over demand in the bicycle industry began to push the cost of a machine down to a comparative level. In addition, it is important to realize that Edmonton's harsh winters prevented the use of bicycles on a year-round basis. In contrast to other towns that enjoyed a more temperate climate, Edmonton suffered heavy snowfalls and freezing temperatures for up to six months of the year. Vancouver, for example, had ideal conditions for cycling, and even immediately after winter rains it was claimed that cyclists came forth in "legions," skimming the streets and roads "...like swallows after a storm."[24] Cyclists in Edmonton, however, were more severely restricted by the weather and needed to own a horse, as well as a bicycle, to ensure mobility throughout the winter months. Under such unique circumstances, particularly in 1895 when the cost of a bicycle was still prohibitive and machines often difficult to obtain, it would seem that cycling in Edmonton was an exclusive, rather than a democratic, activity. According to Robert Smith, bicycles only became available to the "masses" when public pressure and, more importantly, over production on the part of manufacturers, brought about a drop in prices. It is difficult, he says, to evaluate the relative purchasing power of the dollar at different times in history, but certainly the men employed to assemble machines in eastern factories had to work for several months at the

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[19] Ibid., p. 239.
[20] Ibid., p. 227.
[21] Ibid., p. 239.
[22] Ibid., p. 240.
[23] Bulletin 14 July 1892.

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[24] T.L. Grahame, "Pastimes in British Columbia," The Canadian Magazine of Politics, Science, Art and Literature (Vol. 10, March, 1898.), p. 464.

prevailing wage if they wanted to buy their own bicycles.[25] By the end of May, 1895, at least one prairie newspaper acknowledged that "the West wants the bicycle" but "...the only hindrance to its general adoption," declared the Medicine Hat News, "has been the first cost."[26] In Edmonton, it was only those with sufficient wealth who could afford the luxury of alternative means of transport and an analysis of the occupations of bicycle club officials lends support to this notion. Of the eight different members occupying leadership positions in the club between 1893 and 1895, two are lawyers, two are doctors, one is a real estate agent, one is a merchant, one is a bank manager, and another is a clerk at the Hudson's Bay Company store. Hence, not only is there little evidence that bicycles were owned by less affluent members of the community, but from the outset the policies and the outlook of the club were directed by a segment of society characterized by status, professional or commercial employment, and high levels of income.

The 'bicycle question' raised by the Bulletin was also significant in another sense. For even though the initial debate between proponents of the bicycle and those who favoured the horse was sometimes reflected in various forms of advertising, (A manufacturer's catalogue, for instance, depicted an Indian brave mounting an American Rambler after his horse had been struck down and killed by an arrow.[27]) the nature of the supposed conflict was more deep-seated. It was not the machine itself that was the real target of criticism, since horses in Edmonton had already proved themselves skittish and accident prone,[28] rather it was the speed of bicycles that was considered contentious. Richard Harmond believes that during the 1890s the public imagination was captivated by the concept of speed and "...much of the attraction of the bicycle stemmed from the fact that the vehicle was able to actualize this idea in a highly gratifying fashion."[29] Rapidly functioning devices such as the sewing machine, typewriter and high-speed press were also valued, and speed and efficiency became associated with the progress of civilization.[30] In Edmonton, this attitude is well emphasized by the "large fanfare" which greeted the arrival of the first electric sewing machine,[31] the increasing use of labour-saving devices in professional businesses,[32] and the fact that up until April, 1895, the only formal cycling activity mentioned in the pages of the Bulletin was competitive racing. Furthermore, the earliest surviving photographs of cycling in Edmonton all depict Pat McNamara astride his light weight bicycle, dressed in the racing costume of the period.[33] In 1894, the report of a twenty mile race between a team of horses and a cyclist in the United States was published in the Medicine Hat News, and the result left little doubt regarding the superior speed of bicycles.[34]

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[25] Smith, p. 25.
[26] Medicine Hat News 30 May 1895.

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[27] Gormully and Jeffery Manufacturing Company, American Cycles (Chicago: Gormully and Jeffery Manufacturing Co., 1891).

[28] Runaway horses dashing through the streets were commonplace. Bulletin 4 April 1895. See also MacGregor, p. 116.

[29] Harmond, p. 233.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Bulletin 6 August 1894.

[32] P.L. McNamara, for example, added a "grapho-phone" to the resources of his law office. Bulletin 29 July 1895.

It is not surprising, then, that the Bulletin should focus on the dangers inherent in the "sudden appearance" of a bicycle, and call for limits on speeding cyclists, in its discussion of the 'bicycle question.' Indeed, the same dispute had already been raised by the Calgary Weekly Herald in 1893 when it urged the town council to "... make some regulations with regard to bicycles on the sidewalks,"[35] and the issue was hotly debated in the eastern press.[36] What is remarkable is that the town council in Edmonton seemed to react so quickly to the concerns of the Bulletin. Only two days after the issue received attention in the newspaper, councillor C.F.S. Strang moved "That the solicitor be instructed to inform the council in what manner the speed of

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[33] Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. B6435 and B6435, 17 February 1894; B6438, 25 August 1894; B6437, 22 January 1895.

[34] Medicine Hat News 12 July 1894.

[35] Calgary Weekly Herald 5 April 1893.

[36] See, for example, Mail and Empire 3 April 1895. Cited in C. Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, The Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company. Sunday Streetcars and Municipal Reform in Toronto, 1888-1897 (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1977), p. 170.

Bicycling can be regulated,"[37] and on the following day the letter from the council secretary to the town solicitor was dispatched.[38] Although there is no record of the response to this request, and no means of establishing when the first by-law on bicycles came into effect, the motion by the council and the letter by the secretary are significant. Firstly, the speedy reaction of the council and the secretary's addendum to his letter, ("... if it can be done you might prepare a by-law for the next meeting,") indicate that there was some urgency to the matter, and that the council was eager to exercise some form of control over the problem. Secondly, it is important to consider that none of the five council members (Mayor Wilson, and councillors Kelly, Strang, Cameron and Bellamy), nor the town secretary (A.G. Randall), had, at that time, ever been involved in cycling activities, and both Thomas Bellamy and John Kelly earned their livelihood by supplying the town with horse-drawn vehicles.[39] Therefore, even though several prominent men employed in professions were enthusiastic about cycling, there were also well established members of society who had a vested interest in equine affairs. Finally, it is somewhat ironic that the request for a by-law to curtail the use of bicycles was directed to a solicitor who had previously been in a partnership with Pat McNamara, the leading cyclist of the town. Not only was Nicholas Beck extremely reticent to respond to the council's request,[40] but within the next twelve months he was to become a member of the Edmonton Bicycle Club,[41] and deliberately rode on the sidewalk in defiance of a council regulation.[42] Given that during this period all seven of the lawyers practicing in Edmonton either owned a bicycle or became members of a cycling club, it appears there was little the council could do to restrain the activities of cyclists in general.

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[37] Council Minute Book 24 April 1895. p. 120.

[38] Town Secretary's Papers. Outgoing Correspondence, 25 April 1895, p. 196.

[39] Kelly was the proprietor of City Carriage Works and Bellamy owned a company that sold buggies and agricultural equipment. See J.B. Spurr (ed.), The Edmonton District Directory for the Year 1895, Containing Full and Authentic Information, Statistics, Tables, Maps and Guides to Northern Alberta (Edmonton: J.B. Spurr, 1895). Only several years later did Bellamy declare an interest in cycling affairs. Bulletin 12 May 1898.

By the middle of May, 1895, the management of the bicycle races for the Queen's Birthday holiday had been undertaken by the club and it was announced that A.H. Goodwin, S.B. McNamara and P.L. McNamara were in training for the five events.[43] Competitors for the sports were expected from other towns in the territory, and the offer from the Canadian Pacific Railway to give a five dollar excursion rate from Calgary was eagerly accepted.[44] The Edmonton sports' committee agreed to guarantee over five hundred dollars in fares for a special train, and its departure and return to Calgary was scheduled for "...the shortest possible time, so that there is no more lost time than is absolutely necessary."[45] After the holiday weekend, in an editorial report entitled "The Celebration," the Bulletin speculated that bad weather had "... most likely prevented many people in towns along the line from taking advantage of the excursion," but the athletic events themselves were judged a great success.[46] Bicycle races took place on both days of the sports, and on Saturday evening the bicycle club staged a well-attended concert in Robertson's hall.[47] Although perhaps not all of those in attendance were members of the cycling club, the event in itself was necessary for the morale of cyclists in Edmonton, since according to Stephen Hardy the social aspect of club life in the late nineteenth century was vitally important to group solidarity.[48] In the light of recent antagonism towards cyclists from the editor of the Bulletin and the town council, it is understandable that the club was keen to bolster the spirit of members by staging a successful function that "... was very well done and closed amid uproarious applause."[49] Prizes were also distributed by the president of the club - two firsts to P.L. McNamara, one

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[40] The town secretary had to remind Beck of the matter several months later. Town Secretary's Papers, Outgoing Correspondence 6 June 1895. R.G.8. Class 2. p. 127.

[41] Bulletin 27 April 1896.

[42] Bulletin 25 May 1896.

[43] Bulletin 13 May 1895.

[44] Bulletin 6 May 1895.

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[45] Bulletin 16 May 1895.
[46] Bulletin 27 May 1895.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Hardy, How Boston Played, p. 143.
[49] Bulletin 27 May 1895.

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first to A.L. Goodwin, and two seconds to S.B. McNamara - who expressed his regret that there had been no competition from "the outside" on the present occasion, but hoped there would be in the future.[50] A week later, the "handsome" silver and gold medals won by Pat McNamara were put on display in Emmanuel Raymer's jewellery store window, and the attention of the town turned towards other events.[51] In the past, prizes won by athletes had usually been donated by merchants or prominent citizens, but in this case the sports committee provided the medals.[52]

On Dominion Day, sports were held in South Edmonton, and although the Bulletin listed the results of the two bicycle races, its report lacked some of the detail provided by the South Edmonton News.[53] In the latter newspaper the place getters were listed as follows:

> Half Mile Open, 1st P.L. McNamara, 2nd S.B. McNamara, 3rd J.E. Graham.
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> One Mile, green, 1st J.G. Fairbanks, 2nd G. Coriveau, 3rd Jos. Kelly.[54]

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[50] Ibid.
[51] Bulletin 30 May 1895.
[52] In 1889, for example, Dr. Wilson donated four bats as prizes for the best cricket averages, and in 1893 four silver brooches were awarded by John Looby to female curlers. See respective references in the Bulletin 6 April 1889 and 23 February 1893.
[53] C.f., the Bulletin 4 July 1895 and the South Edmonton News 4 July 1895.
[54] South Edmonton News ibid. The Corriveau surname was spelt correctly in the Bulletin ibid.

Significantly, none of the competitors resided in South Edmonton, and all except Sam McNamara, brother of Patrick, were to play important roles in the development of cycling in Edmonton during 1896. Later in August, Regina hosted the C.W.A. championships as part of a larger exhibition, and most newspapers gave "the greatest wheeling event of the season" extensive coverage.[55] Both the Bulletin and the South Edmonton News published extracts from the "Territorial Exhibition Notes,"[56] and according to the Medicine Hat News, interest was particularly high because all bicycle clubs in the Northwest Territories had sent representatives to compete in the series of fourteen races.[57] The report also added that various hotels were offering special accommodation and discount rates to members of the C.W.A. The Windsor, for example, proposed to house cyclists and their bicycles in a separate building for two dollars per night "... so that wheelmen who are not the quietest of athletes may enjoy themselves thoroughly without disturbing the residents of the hotel."[58] Several athletes from Edmonton attended the Exhibition,including Sam and Dan McNamara,[59] but their brother Patrick, feted by the Calgary Herald as one of the four best cyclists in the Territories, remained behind.[60] S.B. McNamara competed in nine events, finishing in first place on six occasions, and the Bulletin was eager to publish the results as soon as P.L. McNamara received the telegrams from his brother.[61] Although suffering an illness and hampered by windy conditions, Sam set a Territorial record for the half mile handicap and was never placed lower than second in any event.[62] In addition, information from the full list of results reveals that McNamara competed in "Class A," a category for cyclists who were strict amateurs,[63] and it is noteworthy that even though he worked on a mining slough within twenty miles of Edmonton,[64] the Calgary Herald was anxious to lay claim to his success, "As Mr. S. McNamara is really a Calgary boy."[65]

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[55] Bulletin 1 July 1895.
[56] Ibid., and South Edmonton News 11 July 1895.
[57] Medicine Hat News 25 July 1895.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Bulletin 29 July 1895.

But as cycling itself became more popular, it seems that the bicycle's function as a racing machine began to receive less emphasis. On the very day that the Reverend George Dean set off on a bicycle trip from Edmonton to Calgary,[66] the Medicine Hat News commented on the

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[60] The Bulletin received a souvenir of "Northwest bicycling" from the Calgary Herald. It featured photographs of P.L. McNamara and J.E. Graham. Bulletin 1 August 1895.

[61] See the Bulletin 5 August 1895 and 8 August 1895.

[62] Bulletin 12 August 1895.

[63] Medicine Hat News 8 August 1895. Other categories were "Class B" for employees of cycle firms, and "Class C" for true professionals. Cox, p. 67.

[64] Bulletin 22 August 1895.

[65] Cited in South Edmonton News 15 August 1895.

[66] Bulletin 30 May 1895.

"astonishing" wave of public opinion that now favoured the adoption of the bicycle as a multi-purpose vehicle:

> Clergymen dignifiedly make their parish calls on the steed that tires not, doctors make sick calls, creditors make the oft repeated visit, and young men and maidens tell the old, old story during the exhilarating spin in the gloaming on the whirling wheel.[67]

Dean continued to make parish visits on his bicycle throughout the summer,[68] and longer tours were also undertaken by John Graham, who cycled to Red Deer before catching a train to Banff.[69] J.A. McDougall and Thomas Hourston, "two Edmonton old timers," also became "affected by bicycles" and completed a return trip to Fort Saskatchewan.[70] There are few references to female cyclists in the Bulletin during 1895, but a photograph of a drop-framed bicycle resting on a special wooden stand outside the Jasper Hotel suggests that women continued to be avid enthusiasts, despite their absence from competitive racing.[71] The nature of cycling in Edmonton was changing in the latter half of 1895. The involvement of older married men in addition to young bachelors, the occasional reference to touring rather than racing, and the shifting emphasis from speed to recreation, all tend to indicate that the activity of cycling was becoming not only more popular, but more respectable as well.

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[67] Medicine Hat News 30 May 1895.
[68] Bulletin 29 August 1895.
[69] Bulletin 22 August 1895.
[70] Bulletin 24 June 1895.
[71] Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. B5559.

CHAPTER V

"The Town is Alive With Them"

Cycling Rivalries in Edmonton, 1896

Given Edmonton's harsh winter climate, the normal practice for summer sporting groups was to 'hibernate' over the colder months, and then 're-organize' for a new season when the weather improved. It was usual, therefore, for the annual meetings of non-winter recreational clubs to be held in late March or April. Many other social groups, such as masonic lodges, the Old Timers' association and the dramatic club, could continue on a year-round basis, but sports such as cricket, lawn tennis, and cycling were seasonal in nature and active participation depended on favourable weather conditions. One possible indication that interest in cycling had increased, was the setting of an earlier date for the annual meeting of the Edmonton Bicycle Club. In 1893 officials had been elected in June; in 1894 they were chosen in May; and in 1895 the annual meeting was held in April. As the Queen's Birthday holiday in May and the Dominion Day celebration in July often involved cycling races, it seems likely that the club would seek to be organized well in advance of these functions, in the expectation that their sport would be included in the program of events.

It is quite extraordinary, then, that in January, 1896, during a winter characterized by skating carnivals, various curling competitions, extensive activity in hockey, and temperatures close to fifty degrees below zero, a second bicycle club should be formed in Edmonton. As the following report shows, the founders of the North Star club were not only determined to remain an exclusive group, but they lost little time in setting out clear guidelines for their organization:

> A meeting of local cyclists was held last night in the store of the Edmonton Hardware Co. for the purpose of forming a bicycle club. J.D. McBride was voted to the chair, and after some discussion it was resolved to form a club to be called the North Star Bicycle Club, and to affiliate with the Canadian Wheelmen's Association.
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> The following gentlemen signed the roll and paid the membership fee: J.D. McBride, W.H. Clarke, J.A. Stovel, C.M. Woodworth, J.G. Fairbanks, A.H. Goodwin, E. Carey, G. Corriveau, T. Hourston and J. Laurencelle.
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> The club was then declared duly formed, and officers were elected as follows: President, J.D. McBride; vice-president, C.M. Woodworth; secretary-treasurer, W.H. Clarke; captain, J.G. Fairbanks; lieutenant, J.A. Stovel; bugler, G. Corriveau. It was decided to limit the number of active male members to twelve, and to admit an equal number of lady cyclists as members. A committee was appointed to draft by-laws. The colors adopted are red, white and blue, and the badge to be a five point star with blue enamel points, and centre to be red ground with a white "N" in the centre. The club dress for men is to be dark blue knickerbockers and stockings, and white sweater. The declared objects of this new club are to encourage cycling for touring, racing,

> etc, and to promote emulation amongst members of Edmonton clubs.[1]

The length of the article is also significant, for it reflects a perception by the editor of the Bulletin that the formation of a second bicycle club was especially noteworthy and deserved substantial attention. Indeed, up until this time, no other sporting group in Edmonton had been confronted by a 'rival' organization. Most clubs either competed against nearby towns, or divided themselves into 'scratch' teams on the basis of surname, marital status, or some other convenient category. The one exception, it seems, was the hockey club, which consisted of two teams. The 'senior' group of players, and the club as a whole, were known as the Thistles, while the second team, referred to as 'juniors,' were known as the Stars.[2] The terms senior and junior indicated experience and ability rather than age, and the less skillful Stars occasionally played games against the Shamrocks, representing South Edmonton, and the eager schoolboys of Edmonton.[3] It is clear, though, that all formal hockey contests took place at the Thistle rink and were played under the auspices of one club.[4] Sometimes one or two sporting groups dissolved due to an apparent lack of interest, often to reform in later years with new officials and a different membership, but there was never more than one club representing any single sport prior to the formation of the North Star Bicycle Club. What makes the existence of a second cycling club so important, then, is not only the desire of members to be distinctive and separate from the Edmonton Bicycle Club, but the deliberate decision of the group to limit its membership to twelve men and twelve women. In many ways, it was the nature of cycling itself that allowed such a development to occur, for other sports such as cricket or football necessarily relied on a wide membership and the competitive aspect of a game to make the concept of a club viable. Some sports, such as hockey, were also dependent on suitable facilities, so unless alternative venues could be found, breakaway groups were unlikely to form. Riding a bicycle, on the other hand, like golf and boating, could be enjoyed at an individual level, without the restriction of time, the need for competition, or the necessity of a suitable arena. Indeed, perhaps the greatest appeal of the bicycle was that it had a variety of uses, not the least of which was its function as a vehicle of transportation. The activity of cycling, therefore, was not confined to a monolithic club structure, and in a small but growing community such as Edmonton it was possible for an exclusive group such as the North Star Bicycle Club to exist alongside a larger, more established organization.

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[1] Bulletin 23 January 1896.
[2] Bulletin 6 February 1896.
[3] Bulletin 13 January 1896 and 27 January 1896.
[4] Bulletin 23 January 1896.

Apart from limited membership, an aspect that differentiated Edmonton's two cycling clubs was the emphasis given to touring as opposed to racing. For despite the intention of the new club to affiliate with the Canadian Wheelmen's Association, a body devoted primarily to encouraging the competitive aspects of the sport, the main focus of the North Star group throughout 1896 was touring, an activity that had become popular in Edmonton during the latter half of the previous year.[5] Similarly, the detailed description of their club uniform and badge suggests that it was the appearance rather than the racing capability of members that mattered most, for the rival Edmonton Bicycle Club never stipulated correct dress requirements or adopted formal club colours. Another difference between the two cycling groups was that the North Star Bicycle Club was keen to designate the position of "bugler" within club ranks. Far from being a superfluous office, the bugler rode behind the captain while on a tour and had the responsibility of sounding calls to regulate the speed of the run, change the riding formation of the group, or warn of impending dangers.[6] In fact, according to James McGurn's history of cycling, many club bugle calls were taken directly from the Cavalry Tactics Manual of the United States Army, and most bicycle clubs made an effort to assign military titles, such as captain, lieutenant and bugler, to committee posts. In an extension of the military model, the bugler and other club officials could also be identified by gold braiding or a tasselled cord,[7] while the widespread use of the versatile "safety" bicycle gave momentum to predictions that the bicycle would eventually supercede the horse in military affairs.[8] Throughout the 1890s, various magazines and newspapers agreed that "the bicycle ... [would] find its highest function in time of war."[9] In America, large numbers of soldiers learned how to ride, drill, and deploy on bicycles, and to this end an organization called the United States Military Wheelmen was formed.[10] More than anything else, however, the para-military nature of the North Star club suggests a preoccupation with efficiency, appearance, and well-planned activities - the characteristics of a group seeking to establish a unique identity within the town.

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[5] Supra pp. 71-73.

[6] N. Clayton, Early Bicycles (Aylesbury: Shire Publications Limited, 1986), p. 28. See also Hornung, p. 246.

While the very existence of an alternative cycling group in Edmonton presupposes a dissatisfaction with certain aspects of the original bicycle club, the intention of the North Star cyclists to "promote emulation amongst members of

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[7] McGurn, p. 53.

[8] See, for example, R.P. Scott, Cycling Art, Energy, and Locomotion: A Series of Remarks on the Development of Bicycles, Tricycles, and Man-Motor Carriages (Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott Company, 1889), p. 187.

[9] Harper's Weekly 11 April 1896. Cited in Sloane, p. 279. See also Medicine Hat News 6 September 1894 and Smith, chapter 12.

[10] Sloane, p. 280.

Edmonton clubs" may reflect a more general desire to improve the standard of other sporting groups in the community. In this sense, the very name of the North Star club has some significance. Since other sporting organizations in Edmonton had no need to distinguish themselves in any way, groups were simply referred to by their designated sport, whether it was lacrosse, baseball, cricket or rifle shooting.[11] Whenever teams competed with other towns, the appellation "Edmonton" was usually added, and on such occasions the particular sport and the word 'club' were treated as proper nouns. When a second bicycle club was formed, though, the need for a distinctive name was obvious, and after procedural matters were dealt with at the inaugural meeting, debate on the issue took precedence.[12] "After some discussion...," the members chose "North Star" as an appropriate name, and given the aims of the club, it is not surprising that they should see the Polaris, the brightest star in the constellation Ursa Minor, frequently used for navigation, as symbolic of its purpose.[13] In addition, while most cycling apparel of the period tended to be drab in colour as a concession to muddy roads, the club uniform, with white sweater bearing a special emblem, must have looked impressive and contributed to a sense of group identity.[14] Even the badge itself is a reflection of the fastidiousness with which the group considered its appearance, for the founding members wasted no time in stipulating its design at their initial gathering.[15] Also of significance is the fact that the North Star club explicitly recognized female cyclists as full members of the group, in direct contrast to the Edmonton Bicycle Club, which, like its counterpart in Calgary, only conferred "honorary" status on women, granting them few, if any, privileges.[16] Debate~~s~~ in society concerning the impact of the bicycle on health had intensified when women first began to ride their machines, but by 1896, medical authorities throughout America had come down in favour of cycling as a safe and healthy exercise for women.[17] In this context, while the South Edmonton News makes it clear that the activity of cycling was pursued with enthusiasm by "... lady cyclists [who] have predominated our streets for the last two seasons,"[18] it is interesting to note that neither the

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[11] The one exception, noted earlier in the chapter, was the hockey club.

[12] Bulletin 23 January 1896.

[13] For an explanation of the importance of the North Star see E. Friedman (ed.), Collier's Encyclopedia (New York: MacMillan Educational Company, 1982), p. 645.

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[14] Black or navy blue were the available colours in most catalogues. See, for example, Gormully and Jeffery, pp. 59-60. The League of American Wheelmen also recommended utilitarian colours for uniforms. Smith, p. 94.

[15] See National Museum of Science and Technology Collection Profile: Bicycles (Ottawa: National Museum of Science and Technology, 1990) for a discussion of bicycle paraphernalia.

[16] C.f., the Bulletin 15 April 1895 and Klassen, p. 4.

[17] Smith, pp. 63-71. The support of the medical profession for cycling was often cited in sales catalogues. See, for example, H.A. Lozier and Company, Cleveland Bicycles (Cleveland: H.A. Lozier and Co., 1895).

[18] South Edmonton News 26 March 1896.

Bulletin nor the News record the name of any female member in either club. Further, it seems unlikely that women ever attended meetings, although it would be reasonable to assume that active female cyclists, if married, would be members of the same bicycle group as their husbands.

After the initial meeting of the North Star club in January, more than three months passed before the members had their first official "run." It can be assumed that poor weather forestalled the zeal of nearly all Edmonton cyclists in 1896, for substantial snowfalls and cold snaps continued to disrupt outdoor activities until the middle of April.[19] In these conditions, cycling was at best a hazardous activity, and those citizens who rode their bicycles in the early spring, like G.J. Kinnaird, suffered "spills" and injuries.[20] However, the cold weather did not prevent the North Star club from holding evening meetings at the Edmonton Hardware Company store, and gatherings for February and March were announced in the Bulletin.[21] Aside from discussing club business, the members of the group must also have taken the opportunity to admire the newest merchandise in the store, for within a week of the club's second meeting, a large newspaper advertisement proclaimed that the Edmonton Hardware Company had secured the agency for the

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[19] See comments on the weather in the Bulletin 6 April 1896 and 13 April 1896.

[20] Bulletin 30 April 1896.

[21] See respective references in the Bulletin 3 February 1896 and 13 April 1896.

'Columbia' bicycle.[22] Like other agents in the town, therefore, J.D. McBride, as proprietor of a store that made profits from the sale of bicycles, had a vested interest in the promotion of cycling. His willingness to take on the presidency of the North Star club, then, is a strong indication that the commercial possibilities associated with a bicycle "craze" were soon recognized by businessmen in Edmonton. In some ways, this observation helps to explain the widespread involvement of businessmen in both cycling clubs, as it is clear that most self-employed merchants possessed something more than the traditional membership prerequisites of time, money, and status. In general, they had a propensity to display the qualities that had brought them to Edmonton in the first place - a keen sense of business acumen and a desire to further commercial interests. In the case of the North Star club, all of the ten members who signed the roll at the inaugural meeting can be classified as merchants or professional men, with the exception of the club captain, John Fairbanks, who was employed as a clerk at Larue and Picard's general store.[23] Of these ten men, four had a direct pecuniary interest in the sale of bicycles. McBride and Corriveau stocked the

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[22] Bulletin 10 February 1896.
[23] See Appendix A which lists members of the club and their occupations.

'Columbia' model at their hardware store,[24] the dentist Goodwin was an agent for the 'Brantford' brand,[25] and it was not long before James Stovel announced his intention to carry the 'Red Bird' bicycle as a sideline to his tinsmithing business.[26] In contrast to 1895, when it was difficult to obtain a bicycle in Edmonton, advertisements appearing in the Bulletin throughout 1896 give a clear indication that machines were now widely available. In part, this new availability was due to the increased production of bicycle companies in eastern Canada, but the enthusiasm of local entrepreneurs, who were prepared to stock bicycles in addition to their normal line of goods, was also a significant factor.[27] It is debatable, of course, whether a love of cycling itself or a desire for mere profit initially stimulated and then sustained the interest in bicycles of several Edmonton merchants and businessmen. But during this period, nearly all of them maintained an active involvement in one or the other of the town's two clubs, and many held positions of influence within club ranks. Hence, while the North Star club limited its membership to a small group of men and women, its policy of "emulation" can also be seen as encouraging cycling within the community as a whole, an aim consistent with the promotion of bicycle sales and good business practice.

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[24] Bulletin 10 February 1896. The Edmonton Hardware Company was successor to the store owned by Chave and Corriveau. Bulletin 2 July 1894. According to the 1895 business directory, Corriveau continued to be involved in the company. See Spurr, passim.
[25] Bulletin 15 April 1895.
[26] Bulletin 14 April 1897.
[27] Humber, pp. 50-53.

There is little doubt that 1896 was a boom year for the bicycle industry throughout North America and, indeed, in Europe as well.[28] By the end of the year nearly four million Americans owned bicycles, and manufacturers, who had already expanded their factories to meet the demand in 1895, resorted to sub-contracting to fill their orders. The cycling craze reached fever pitch in the United States and the market continued to expand, fuelled by the demand for women's bicycles and the regular promotion of new models by an industry which rendered old machines obsolete. Many of the new designs and different styles promoted by manufacturers bore little relationship to the actual performance of the bicycle, but from the outset, sales catalogues and advertisements stressed the necessity of owning the latest model.[29] In the pioneer town of Edmonton, many different bicycle styles were also available, and several newspaper advertisements during 1896 recommended the virtues of one particular model over another.[30] Thus, even though bicycles became more readily available to those who could afford them, the status enjoyed by citizens who possessed a better quality machine, "a First Class, Up-to-date Lady's or Gent's Wheel" for example, must have been considerable.[31] In fact, much of the early advertising for bicycles in Edmonton emphasized the attributes of the latest machines rather than the cost, suggesting that even though the price of bicycles was declining, it was still important to purchase a better quality vehicle.[32] Furthermore, as the need for road safety increased, a "secondary" accessory industry for bicycles developed, and in an age characterized by experimentation and the quest for improved machinery, it was inevitable that a wide variety of maintenance tools, light fixtures, bells, brakes and related gadgets would become available.[33] Once again, this more general development is reflected in newspaper advertisements from Edmonton, as customers were offered an extensive range of bicycle equipment, including a "... choice of six Handle Bars, three Heights in Frames, [and] any Saddle made."[34] As several authors point out, the commercial promotion of the bicycle in newspapers and catalogues not only helped to break down lingering skepticism towards the machine, but helped to widen the market and spur production.[35] In Edmonton, bicycle advertisements provide firm evidence of keen competition between businessmen, and reflect the availability of different styles and models. In addition, it is not surprising that the bulk of brands offered for sale in the town were Canadian, for in 1895 the federal government introduced "anti-dumping" legislation and tariffs in order to protect the domestic bicycle industry from being swamped with American imports.[36] According to David Glass, during this period most of the Canadian bicycle manufacturing companies were situated in Ontario and many produced bicycles as a sideline to the manufacture of agricultural implements.[37] For this reason, hardware stores were the natural competitors to specialized bicycle agents, but with the boom of 1896, a wide variety of stores, eager to capture a slice of the lucrative market, began to stock bicycles or act as agents for the larger companies.[38] While newspapers and sales catalogues were the major means of promoting bicycle sales in Edmonton, the use of advertising posters, pamphlets and window displays was probably widespread. Bryan Holme, in his history of the artform, suggests that the golden age of prestige advertising reached its height about 1895, when coloured posters became the rage throughout America.[39] In addition, Jack Rennert, in his more specific study, claims that poster artists were fascinated by the new machine and bicycle manufacturers relied heavily on the poster for its marketing value. By the turn of the century, he says, "... more posters were created for bicycles than for any other product."[40] Moreover, Rennert observes that most bicycle posters emphasized the speed and liberation of cycling, and many designs featured, if not idealized, the female rider.[41] While much of this ephemeral material no longer exists, it is fair to assume that agents in Edmonton adorned their stores with colourful bicycle posters and perhaps even set up displays of the latest bicycle equipment. On several occasions, for example, the Bulletin refers readers to posters on view in the town,[42] and mention is made of sporting scenes painted on store windows.[43] But even aside from these scattered references to other forms of advertising, it is clear that immediately after the formation of the North Star Bicycle Club, newspapers in both Edmonton and South Edmonton began to publish an increasing

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[28] See Clayton, p. 26 for comments on the "spectacular boom" in cycle production outside North America.
[29] Smith, pp. 17-33.
[30] See, for example, advertisements in the Bulletin 19 March 1896, and the South Edmonton News 23 April 1896.

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[31] Description from an advertisement for the the 'Comet.' Bulletin 13 February 1896.

[32] See, for example, advertisements in the Bulletin 19 March 1896, 2 April 1896, and 14 April 1896.

[33] Glass, Alberta Usage, pp. 36-46 provides a useful commentary of bicycle accessories, and reproduces several examples of advertisements from sales catalogues.

[34] Bulletin 2 April 1896.

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[35] H.E. Stephenson and C. McNaught, The Story of Advertising in Canada. A Chronicle of Fifty Years (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1940), p. 135 and Harmond, p. 230.
[36] Armstrong and Nelles, p. 169.
[37] Glass, Alberta Usage, pp. 61-63.
[38] Smith, p. 30.

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[39] B. Holme, Advertising, Reflections of a Century (New York: The Viking Press, 1982), p. 9.

[40] J. Rennert, 100 Years of Bicycles Posters (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 3.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Bulletin 10 June 1895 and 1 July 1895.

[43] Bulletin [illegible] November 1898.

number of advertisements for bicycles, nearly all of them directly sponsored by prominent cycling club members.

With these comments in mind, two series of newspaper advertisements deserve special comment, as they highlight several significant issues relevant to the development of cycling in Edmonton. Firstly, on February 13, 1896, the Bulletin announced that "H. Bowen has received the Edmonton agency for the Comet bicycle, the leading Canadian make," and the first of twenty individual advertisements for the 'Comet' appeared in print.[44] Herb Bowen had initially arrived from Calgary in May, 1892, and immediately joined the Hudson's Bay Company, but after one year he left that position and was employed by John Cameron, a general merchant, until he secured the bicycle agency.[45] Bowen's original advertisement for the 'Comet' is particularly noteworthy, because it advised that the price of a new machine was one hundred dollars, the first time that the cost of a bicycle was mentioned in the press. In other advertisements, which changed in format and text every few weeks, he made clever plays on words and juxtaposed the arrival of his stock with the arrival of Perrine's comet, which was approaching the earth at a tremendous speed. "Good enough," he declared, "'The Comet' is coming. Let her come," but "the Comet Bicycle has arrived first."[46] Later, when the Bulletin informed readers that the comet could not yet be seen with the naked eye,[47] Bowen posed a supercilious query - "Is the Comet visible yet?" - and took great delight in declaring, "Why the town is alive with them."[48] In another advertisement, he prosaically claimed that the 'Comet' bicycle was "Not a cheap wheel, but a first class article fully guaranteed for one year" and, after urging ladies to give him their orders, he ended his spiel with a phrase that reflected an eager desire for business: "Old men, young men, lean men, fat men, I can supply your most fastidious wants in Cycles."[49] Many of Bowen's promotions depicted a drawing of a bicycle, with the word 'Comet' inscribed on the spokes of the rear wheel, a device which gave his advertisements a strong visual appeal.[50] Finally, in the week after the last Comet advertisement appeared, the Bulletin listed Bowen as a member of the Edmonton Bicycle Club, although he did not hold an executive position.[51] In May, Bowen became the agent for the Singer Sewing Machine Company, and not surprisingly the Bulletin praised him as a man who had "the knack of advertising."[52] Bowen's highly personalized advertisements for the 'Comet' thus provide useful insights into the state of cycling in Edmonton. Not only did he direct his sales campaign at both men and women - the enthusiastic declaration that the town was "alive" with bicycles indicating the extent of the craze - but his approach to business reflected a confidence that was shared by most other cycling entrepreneurs.

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[44] Bulletin 13 February 1896 to 20 April 1896.
[45] Bulletin 23 May 1892 and 4 May 1893.
[46] Bulletin 27 February 1896.

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[47] Bulletin 9 March 1896.
[48] Bulletin 2 April 1896.
[49] Bulletin 19 March 1896.
[50] Bulletin 9 March 1896 to 30 March 1896.
[51] Bulletin 27 April 1896.
[52] Bulletin 25 May 1896.

The second important series of bicycle advertisements appearing in the Bulletin during 1896 were those by the Hudson's Bay Company. A week after Herb Bowen announced the availability of the Comet, the Hudson's Bay Company store advertised itself as "... the sole agency for that high class wheel, The Chief Factor."[53] The lengthy advertisement was only published in five consecutive issues of the town's newspaper, but the information provided, and the tone set by the store's promotion, is very instructive. "Bicycles," it was proclaimed, "are no longer a luxury but a necessity, and, to travel in the most comfortable way with the times, every able-bodied man or woman, or those who desire to do so, should possess the best specimen of that marvel of mechanical skill, the modern Safety Bicycle."[54] The 'Chief Factor,' then, was promoted as a comfortable necessity for both sexes that epitomized modernity and the superiority of mechanical skills, aspects of the bicycle which appealed to the progressive element in society. Once again, the emphasis was not so much on the speed of the new machine, but rather on its symbolic qualities and its benefits as a means of transportation. The Hudson's Bay Company bicycle, named after the title given to leaders of fur trading posts, was offered for sale at one hundred dollars, with a discount of ten per cent for cash purchases. A special price "for clubs of not less than five members" could be arranged, and all machines were guaranteed. By March 1896, then, the Hudson's Bay Company had not only begun to advertise bicycles at negotiable prices, but the management of the store recognized the advantages to be gained from patronizing bicycle clubs. Given the dates that the Hudson's Bay Company first advertised the 'Chief Factor,' it is likely that the initial shipment of bicycles to the store arrived by rail from Winnipeg on Monday, March 12. This was the day that J.M. Clossan, the store's purchasing officer returned from the east with several carloads of freight, and John Graham, a clerk for the Company and an office bearer in the Edmonton Bicycle Club, must have taken an active interest in the display of the new spring goods, assuming that they included several bicycles.[55] With various brands now available from at least four different suppliers in Edmonton, cyclists had a range of machines to choose from and business enterprises increasingly came to rely on newspaper advertising as a key component in the promotion of sales. The fact that both the Edmonton Hardware Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, two of the largest stores in the town, decided to become involved in the bicycle trade is indicative of the growing demand for the machines, although the community itself was of such a limited size that few businesses bothered to list an address on their advertisements. With one main street, Jasper Avenue, situated on a rise running parallel with the North Saskatchewan river, and only a few other roughly made roads emanating from the central thoroughfare, minimal directions were needed to locate a store. Phrases such as 'opposite McCauley's stable,' 'above the Bulletin block,' or 'next to Raymer's jewellery store,' designated the location of buildings in most advertisements, and as Carl Betke points out in his physical description of the townsite, many dwellings were simply arranged in clusters, and separated by empty paddocks or scrub.[56] Telephone connections were also rare, and only a handful of stores listed their two-digit numbers in newspaper advertisements.[57] Also of note, is that bicycle advertisements by Herb Bowen and the Hudson's Bay Company were localized and specific in nature. That is, the texts promoting the 'Comet' and the 'Chief Factor' were interspersed with comments on the popularity of the machine within Edmonton itself, and mention was made of the arrival of new stock. The Edmonton Hardware Company, on the other hand, promoted the 'Columbia' bicycle by reprinting the effusive testimonials of the Pope Manufacturing Company, located in Hartford, Connecticut, never referring to the state of cycling in Edmonton.[58]

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[53] Bulletin 19 March 1896.
[54] Ibid.

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[55] Bulletin 12 March 1896.

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[56] Betke, "Urban Community," p. 18.

[57] For details of the telephone system in Edmonton see E.B. Ogle, Long Distance Please. The Story of the TransCanada Telephone System (Toronto: Collins Publishers, 1979), pp. 126-127 and A.W. Cashman, Singing Wires; The Telephones in Alberta (Edmonton: Alberta Government Telephones Commission, 1972).

By the middle of March, 1896, the North Star Bicycle Club had met on three occasions, while members of the Edmonton Bicycle Club were yet to announce their first gathering for the year. However, despite weather conditions which allowed games of hockey and curling to be held until well into April, it was clear that the enthusiasm of cyclists had fuelled, and perhaps had been fuelled by, the competition between bicycle suppliers. On March 16, the Bulletin speculated that "Edmonton will have about 60 cyclists during the coming summer, and probably two if not three bicycle clubs."[59] Given that snowfalls continued to prevent active cycling, it seems likely that the estimate of the Bulletin regarding the number of cyclists in the town was based on bicycle sales. By the end of April the South Edmonton News confirmed that "Some fifty bicycles have been taken from the express office at this place already this spring."[60] With bicycles retailing at a cost of up to one hundred dollars each, sales in the first few months of 1896 must have amounted to almost five thousand dollars and according to the South Edmonton News, "One would imagine from this that there was lots of money in the country."[61] In fact, the ownership of a bicycle was just one way in which affluent citizens chose to display their wealth. Sidney Taylor, for example, was a talented young lawyer originally from New Brunswick who became a charter member of the Edmonton Board of Trade in 1889. He not only owned a bicycle, but he possessed the most up-to-date office equipment, kept a champion racehorse named 'Rosebery,' and on his marriage to Vesta Ross, received a piano as a wedding gift.[62] Furthermore, on Taylor's return from one of his frequent trips to the east coast, he brought back a set of books, valued at fifteen hundred dollars, for his private library. "With this edition," commented the South Edmonton News, "Mr. Taylor's law office is now one of the most complete west of Toronto, none in Winnipeg or Calgary being nearly so replete with the most valuable and expensive law books."[63] For many cyclists in Edmonton, then, the purchase of a bicycle, or two, was not a financial burden because their personal resources easily met the cost of this supposed luxury item. The pleasure for a cyclist like

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[58] Bulletin 5 March 1896.
[59] Bulletin 16 March 1896.
[60] South Edmonton News 30 April 1896.

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[61] Ibid.

[62] Bulletin 2 August 1892. For further biographical detail see F.C. Jamieson, "Edmonton Courts and Lawyers in Territorial Times," Alberta Historical Review (Vol. IV Winter, 1956), p. 5.

[63] South Edmonton News 16 April 1896.

Taylor, may well have come not so much from owning and riding a bicycle, but from the conspicuous display of the latest expensive device.

On March 23, notice of an evening meeting of the Edmonton Bicycle Club appeared in the Bulletin, but it was not until the end of April that the group elected officials for the new season.[64] While this delay in formal organization may have been influenced by unfavourable conditions for cycling, it is possible that the hesitance of members was caused by the very existence of an alternative bicycle club. Since this was the first time that a sporting group in Edmonton had publicly declared an intention to limit its membership, those cyclists not admitted as members may have been anxious about the future of the original club and peeved that they were not asked to join the North Star club. It was a unique and awkward situation, for it was not altogether clear whether the North Star group was simply a different manifestation of the Edmonton Bicycle Club, or a completely new body. The problem was further compounded by the circumstances and actions of several key figures. Sidney Taylor, elected honorary president of the Edmonton Bicycle Club in 1895, was away in Ottawa for several weeks during the early months of 1896. On his return to Edmonton in March, his newly born son, Charlie, died unexpectedly.[65]

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[64] Bulletin 23 March 1896.
[65] Bulletin 19 March 1896 and 23 March 1896.

It is understandable, therefore, that Taylor would have expressed little interest in the organization of a bicycle club at this time. Of greater significance, however, is the fact that both James Stovel and Alexander Goodwin 'defected' to the North Star club despite having held important administrative posts in the original cycling group. Goodwin, for example, had been the secretary-treasurer of the Edmonton Bicycle Club and the decision to switch his allegiance to the exclusive North Star group created a considerable vacuum of leadership in his former club. In early April 1896, the North Star club announced its intention "... to consider the question of increasing the membership of the club from the present limit of twelve."[66] Even though the club was yet to stage its first "run," it seems that the structure and organization of the group was still open to debate. At no stage were the criteria for membership stated in the press, although for the club to remain exclusive there had to be some discrimination between members and non-members. On the surface, there appears to be little that distinguishes the ten individuals who originally formed the North Star club from other cyclists in Edmonton, and there are few clues as to the prerequisites for membership. As noted above, nearly all of the North Star group were either professional or business men, with several earning their living from the sale of bicycles, but the same categories of occupation also apply to the Edmonton Bicycle Club. Many North Star members appeared to be more interested in touring rather than racing, but again there were exceptions.[67] There were no apparent distinctions on religious or ethnic grounds, and there was a mix of bachelors and married men, young and old. From the evidence, none of the group was related to any other member, and none of the ten founders was involved in any other single social group. According to Alan Metcalfe's study of organized sport in Canada, clubs that developed in smaller towns tended to be heterogeneous of necessity, but at the same time, they were comprised of a local elite. In the larger cities, he says, a more hierarchical system developed and the membership of clubs tended to be more homogeneous.[68] Although most clubs in Edmonton were the preserve of dominant figures in the community, they were not exclusively so. As Paul Voisey points out, most formal institutions in small towns could not exclude people on the basis of social class or wealth if they hoped to attract enough members to sustain themselves, and few discouraged active involvement in club activities.[69] The North Star Bicycle Club, however, could exist with only a few members, and deliberately chose to remain exclusive. But unlike other social groups, such as masonic lodges, the activities of the North Star group were never 'secret.' In fact, members of the group were highly conscious of their public profile, for on two separate occasions the officials of the club are listed in the Bulletin, and small alterations to the uniform of the group are also noted.[70] By limiting its membership while simultaneously promoting itself in the press, the club must have enhanced its prestige, but it was a strategy which may well have alienated those cyclists unable to join the select group. In a township of approximately fifteen hundred people, this was an unusual development, for social harmony in such a community depended on the promotion of good will and the avoidance of potential conflict. As Voisey explains, the stability of a small town was always at risk when such conflicts arose, since the animosity and ill feeling of a disgruntled neighbour was difficult to ignore. In larger urban societies, social conflicts could be tolerated without threatening the survival of institutions, because "one's enemies will not show up at church or baseball practice."[71] But in a thinly populated frontier community, where economic and social cooperation was imperative, "... the settlers found it socially useful to deny the existence of any conflict, just as they found it beneficial to believe that no differences of class or wealth separated them."[72] It is hardly surprising, then, that the North Star club felt some pressure to increase its limited membership.

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[66] Bulletin 9 April 1896.

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[67] Goodwin, for example, had entered a bicycle race in the previous year. Bulletin 27 May 1895.

[68] Metcalfe, p. 33.

[69] Voisey, p. 218.

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[70] C.f., the Bulletin 23 January 1896 and 9 April 1896. "The uniform selected is navy blue knickerbockers, black hose, white sweater and navy blue cap." Ibid.

[71] Voisey, p. 234.

At eight o'clock in the evening on Friday, April 13, the North Star Bicycle Club held its fourth meeting in a different location - the law offices of Charles Woodworth.[73] In the previous week, the stock and business of the Edmonton Hardware Company had been purchased by the Ross brothers, and given that Fred Ross was a member of the Edmonton Bicycle Club, it is understandable that the North Star group chose to find an alternative meeting place.[74] J.D. McBride had decided to leave the town in search of business opportunities in Rossland and the haste of his departure meant that an immediate replacement had to be found not only for the bicycle club, but for the school board of which he was a member.[75] As a result, at its April meeting, the North Star duly elected W.T. Henry as president while the limit of its membership was also changed from twelve to seventeen.[76] From this point on, the Bulletin mentions no other changes to club personnel, and throughout 1896, only eleven members of the North Star group (including McBride) are referred to by name in the newspaper. William Henry was never listed as a member of the Edmonton Bicycle Club and he was not among the ten men who signed the roll at the inaugural meeting of the North Star club. He was, however, a successful businessman and an active sportsman, and he had sold cycling apparel at his store since 1894.[77] What remains a mystery, therefore, is the identity of other members of the club. Even though the membership limit had been raised to seventeen men and a corresponding number of women, it is by no means certain that the club had thirty-four active participants. Towards the end of April, the Edmonton Bicycle Club held a meeting "for reorganization" and in an attempt to show its comparative strength, perhaps, the club provided the Bulletin with a complete list of male members.

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[72] Ibid., p. 238.
[73] Bulletin 9 April 1896.
[74] James Ross became the manager of the new hardware store. Bulletin 9 April 1896 and 16 April 1896.
[75] See respective references in the Bulletin 13 April 1896 and 7 May 1896.
[76] Bulletin 13 April 1896.

> The following officers were elected: honorary president, A. Taylor; president, J.A. McDougall; vice-president, P.L. McNamara; Secy-treasurer, J.E. Graham; captain, G.R.F. Kirkpatrick; lieut., J.R. Fulton. The officers compose the executive committee. J.E. Graham is recommended as local consul. The club starts with twenty two members, who are besides the officers mentioned: E. Raymer, J.D. Harrison, F. Ross, S.S. Taylor, H.C. Taylor, A. Harrison, T.A. Stephen, G.J. Kinnaird, E.C. Emery, S. McNeill, H. Aldridge, N.D. Beck, H. Bow[e]n, C.W.S. Bridges, W. Griesbach, H.L. McInnis.[78]

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[77] See respective references in the Bulletin 13 April 1896 and 7 May 1896.

[78] Bulletin 27 April 1896. See also Appendix B.

If these twenty-two names are considered in conjunction with the eleven members of the North Star club, it is possible to gain an overall impression of the extent of cycling in Edmonton during this period. The only names of previously active local cyclists not included in either of the two clubs were J.J. McIntyre, James McDonald, the Reverend George Dean, and Sam McNamara, with the residence of the latter two subject to some transience. Throughout 1896, the Bulletin mentions another six cyclists by name, although only one, Godfrid Corriveau's teenage son, could claim an indirect association with a cycling club.[79] Of the other five, Ed Smith won a 'Brantford' bicycle in a raffle at the Alberta hotel,[80] Constable Brown had his machine stolen from the sidewalk outside the same hotel,[81] Stanley Dean competed in the "boys half mile race" at the Dominion Day sports,[82] and E.J. Cann and Joseph Kelly were among a group of cyclists who challenged a council by-law,[83] an event which is discussed in further detail in the next chapter. The addition of these names expands the list of known cyclists in Edmonton to forty-three males, and according to the Bulletin there were also "eight wheels" in South Edmonton.[84] Throughout the spring, the South Edmonton News informed its readers of any special stock that arrived by rail, and by the middle of May, at least fifty-nine bicycles had been distributed to merchants and individuals in the district.[85] On the basis of these figures alone, the year 1896 can be seen as a boom period for cycling in Edmonton, both at a club level and in the wider community, and once the weather had improved and executive officers were chosen, formal cycling activities commenced in earnest.

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[79] Bulletin 4 July 1896.
[80] Bulletin 23 April 1896.
[81] Bulletin 22 June 1896.
[82] Bulletin 4 July 1896.
[83] Bulletin 25 May 1896.
[84] Bulletin 4 May 1896.

Aside from monthly business meetings, which were now held in James Stovel's store on the first Tuesday evening of each month,[86] the major activity of the North Star club took the form of a weekly "run" to various locations. Notice of these trips regularly appeared in the Bulletin, but the club's initial outing, on April 30, received the most substantial coverage:

> The first run of the North Star bicycle club last Thursday evening was up the St. Albert road to the forks and back via Rat Creek bridge to town. The captain, J.G. Fairbanks, put the club through a few evolutions on Jasper avenue before leaving town. The cyclists looked well in their regulation white sweaters and blue uniform. The next run will be from Stovel's shop on Thursday at 7.30 p.m.[87]

The club's debut was an obvious source of pride for members, as they took time to parade through the main thoroughfare of the town, and made an effort to wear distinctive apparel.

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[85] South Edmonton News 30 April 1896 to 21 May 1896.
[86] Bulletin 4 May 1896 and 1 June 1896.
[87] Bulletin 4 May 1896.

In this regard, it is highly relevant to note that on the very day the uniform was first displayed in public, W.T. Henry, the newly elected president of the North Star club, launched a series of advertisements outlining the virtues of owning a bicycle outfit:

> After you have purchased your Wheel and learned to ride, come to us and get your suit.
>
> It adds greatly to the ease and comfort of Wheeling to have suitable clothing. You look nicer and can make better time by wearing one of our $8.00 suits (with the short pants). We make a specialty in Wheelmen's Supplies so you can rely upon getting the best assortment at the very lowest price.[88]

Outings by the North Star club, then, can almost be construed as an endorsement for Henry's line of goods, and they illustrate the wide range of opportunities available for the commercial exploitation of cycling in Edmonton. James Stovel, for example, was another merchant alert to these opportunities, and his decision to offer "BICYCLE REPAIRS" along with other tinsmithing services, was a clear attempt to cash in on the craze for cycling.[89]

In the following month of May, the Bulletin recorded that "The Queen's Birthday was celebrated very quietly in Edmonton."[90] In April, the town council were informed that Caledonian Games would be held in Calgary during the May holiday weekend, and it is likely that many citizens took advantage of a cheap railway excursion fare to attend the event.[91] Some of those remaining behind either watched or participated in a football match between Edmonton and South Edmonton, while the cyclists of the North Star club took advantage of the Monday holiday to make a longer trip out to Fort Saskatchewan.[92] In the meantime, major preparations were under way for the Dominion Day sports to be held in July. Bicycle races were to be included in the program, but there appeared to be little input on this matter from members of the North Star club since none of them was involved in the organization committee. On the other hand, three executive officers from the Edmonton Bicycle Club, P.L. McNamara, J.E. Graham and Alex Taylor, were active in arranging the list of events.[93] Frank Oliver, editor of the Bulletin, was also a member of the committee, and in June his newspaper observed that the race track was "made lively" every night with athletes training for the sports.[94] Three days after the July celebration, the Bulletin published a complete list of prize winners, devoting quite a deal of space to the bicycle competitions:

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[88] Bulletin 30 April 1896.
[89] Bulletin 1 June 1896.
[90] Bulletin 28 May 1896.

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[91] See Town Secretary's Papers, Incoming Correspondence, 7 April 1896, R.G\8. Class 3, C.3/16, and Bulletin 30 April 1896.
[92] Bulletin 28 May 1896.
[93] Bulletin 11 May 1896.
[94] Bulletin 18 June 1896.

> The bicycle races were under the Canadian wheelmen's rules. Timekeeper J.E. Graham. One mile open race between J.W. Kelly and W. Griesbach resulted in a win for Griesbach. Ed. Carey also started. Time 2.58. About one hundred yards from home Kelly was leading when a bundle of paper on the track caused him to fall off his wheel, and gave the race to Griesbach. The decision however was protested by Kelly's starter.
>
> For the half mile open heats, two in three, there were three entries, P.L. McNamara, S. McNamara and J.A. Stovel. Won by P.L. McNamara. Time 1.15 and 1.25.
>
> In the boys half mile race G. Corriveau was first and Stanley Dean second. Time 1.34.
>
> For the one mile handicap the starters were P.L. McNamara, scratch; W. Griesbach and J.W. Kelly 100 yards each. Won by P.L McNamara. Time 2.56.[95]

Given the number of cyclists in the town, however, it is somewhat surprising that there were so few competitors in the bicycle events. Only eight individuals were listed as entrants for the four contests, with one event restricted to Corriveau and Dean, two teenage boys who may have ridden bicycles owned by their fathers. Of the other six competitors, Pat McNamara and William Griesbach were members of the Edmonton Bicycle Club, and Ed Carey and James Stovel were active in the North Star group. Joseph Kelly and Sam McNamara appeared not to have any club affiliation. In this context, it is interesting to consider that while several Edmonton Bicycle Club members, particularly John Graham and John Harrison, are noted as officials and participants in other athletic events, reports in the Bulletin and the South Edmonton News make no mention of the attendance of North Star club members other than Stovel and Carey.[96] As usual, the bicycle races themselves were dominated by the performances of Pat McNamara, and even though North Star members such as Goodwin, Fairbanks and Corriveau senior had been active competitors in previous years, it appears that they had lost their enthusiasm for racing.[97] Almost imperceptibly, it would seem, the popularity of the bicycle as a vehicle of speed had begun to diminish. The machine had, instead, become more widely acknowledged as a convenient means of transport, while nonetheless remaining something of a status symbol because of its cost. Whether ridden by those in the North Star club on trips to the outskirts of town, or utilized by prominent citizens for shorter journeys within the vicinity of the main street, the speed of the bicycle was no longer its central attraction. Both male and female members of the newly formed golf club, for instance, rode to and from their headquarters at the Chief Factor's "Big House,"[98] and a photograph of a bicycle resting against the wall of the Telephone Exchange and Post

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[95] Bulletin 4 July 1896.

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[96] C.f., South Edmonton News 2 July 1896 and Bulletin 4 July 1896.

[97] C.f., Bulletin 30 May 1895 and South Edmonton News 4 July 1895.

[98] Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. B6629.

Office building,[99] suggests that bicycle traffic in the main street was common. Merchants like W.T. Henry also used the bicycle on longer trips and it is noteworthy that in October, after touring local towns "looking for business," the president of the North Star club took the trouble to write to the Bulletin denying accusations that he was "a scorcher in disguise," that is, a reckless speedster.[100] In 1895, the council had moved to limit the speed of cyclists, thus restricting racing to practice nights on a crowded track and confining formal contests to sports days in May and July. It is evident,however, that by the end of 1896, many cyclists in Edmonton, including most of the North Star members, were less interested in racing than they were in touring and using the bicycle as a means of transport. As Herb Bowen declared, the town was "alive" with bicycles, but it is clear that there had been a distinct shift in emphasis from a concern for speed to an appreciation of style and convenience, an attitude both reflected and promoted in numerous newspaper advertisements.

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[99] Alberta Government Telephones Collection: Vista 33 View Gallery and Museum.
[100] Bulletin 15 October 1896 and 22 October 1896.

CHAPTER VI

"If He Could Get Through on His Bicycle": The Rush to be Rich, 1897

There are several characteristics and key events that distinguish the development of cycling in Edmonton during 1897. In general, the activity itself continued to flourish and a range of evidence supports this contention. In the first instance, advertisements for bicycles were once again prevalent in the town's newspaper and the existence of a variety of agencies intensified competition for the cyclist's dollar. Secondly, the cost of bicycles dropped dramatically throughout the world, an occurrence which had far-reaching effects on the cycling industry and a direct impact on the availability of machines for the general public in Edmonton. Thirdly, reports in the Bulletin and photographs of the period reveal that female cyclists were becoming more active, if not more visible, in the town. Before crucial events in the sphere of club activities can be examined, it is therefore important that these other developments be considered in some detail for they provide a useful and necessary context for the discussion that follows.

In 1897, the Hudson's Bay Company in Edmonton devoted much of its regular advertising space to the promotion of the 'Comet' bicycle, having deleted the 'Chief Factor' from its line of stock.[1] As in previous years, the store also offered a wide range of cycling apparel, including bicycle suites, shoes and caps.[2] Herb Bowen, the original agent for the 'Comet' brand, became the sales representative for the Marshall Well's Hardware Company bicycle, and continued to sell not only sewing machines but organs and pianos as well.[3] A new bicycle agency was also secured by W.H. Martin, the manager of the Edmonton Saddlery Company, and it is significant that his advertisements for "... the celebrated American Chief and Gale Bicycles" appeared together with his promotions for saddles, harnesses and "Patent Braces that will not pull off buttons."[4] Martin's decision to sell bicycles reflects once again the increasing diversification of commercial life in Edmonton, and it suggests that businessmen who made a living from equine affairs no longer felt obligated to distance themselves from the bicycle trade.

It is noteworthy that in 1897 none of the above agents revealed the retail cost of their bicycles in the press. A series of advertisements by the Edmonton Hardware Company, however, provides unequivocal evidence that the price of bicycles fell dramatically within the space of twelve months. No only did the proprietors of the store, the Ross brothers, offer a choice of models in their advertisements, but prices ranged from an upper limit of one hundred and fifteen dollars for an 'E. and D.,' "The only 80 geared Roadster on the market," down to fifty-five dollars for a 'Hartford' bicycle, almost half the cost of new machines offered for sale in 1896.[5] What is more, the hardware store proclaimed that they could sell bicycles "at any price" and they carried a "full stock of Bicycle Repairs of all descriptions."[6] According to cycling historians such as Caunter and Clayton, in 1897 an over-supply of bicycles throughout the world caused a slump in the cycling industry, and even the Bulletin noted that "The collapse of bicycle prices in England caused a panic in cycle stocks."[7] However, public interest in the machine continued to remain strong, as lower prices made bicycles more affordable for a greater number of people. It was only in the final two years of the decade that demand slackened considerably and the popularity of the bicycle began to wane.[8]

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[1] Bulletin 11 March 1897.
[2] Bulletin 15 March 1897 and 15 April 1897.
[3] Bulletin 18 March 1897.
[4] Bulletin 19 April 1897.

In 1897, the market for bicycles in Edmonton exhibited several signs of growth and one key indicator of this trend was the increased prevalence of newspaper advertisements for bicycles, cycling equipment and repair services. Throughout 1896, approximately sixty-two individual advertisements related to the commercial aspects of cycling appeared in the Bulletin. By the end of 1897, the same type of advertisements were published on almost twice as many occasions.[9] Citizens in Edmonton were also keen to purchase second-hand vehicles at a reduced cost, and during March and April of 1897 several advertisements in this category appeared in the press.[10] At least one second-hand 'Brantford' bicycle was sold at an auction of "Household Effects" in September, and William Short, a local barrister, won a new bicycle in a raffle conducted at the Queen's Hotel.[11]

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[5] Bulletin 22 April 1897.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Bulletin 12 July 1897. See Caunter, p. 33 and Clayton, p. 26, who comment on developments in Europe during 1897.
[8] Harmond, p. 240.

Most historians of sport attest to the widespread enthusiasm of females for cycling at the end of the nineteenth century, and in many cases the bicycle itself is portrayed as an instrument of social change for women.[12] Some female cyclists of the Edmonton community, like their male counterparts, continued their active participation in cycling throughout 1897, and once again a variety of evidence supports such a contention. In marked contrast to previous years, for example, the Bulletin mentions two female cyclists by name. In May, "Mrs. Armstrong, while endeavouring to ride a bicycle, ... fell from the machine and broke her finger in a most painful way," while in July "... Mrs. McCormick, wife of M.A. McCormick, accountant at the Hudson's Bay fort here, ... was thrown from her machine and broke her arm ..."[13] Even though both women are identified in the context of accidents, the fact that are named reflects a more receptive attitude towards their activity on the part of the town's newspaper. Furthermore, many bicycle advertisements in the Bulletin remained directed at both "Ladies and Gentlemen," and in August a drop-framed bicycle was offered as a prize in a raffle at the Alberta hotel.[14] It is also highly significant that the only two photographs from this era which depict female cyclists in Edmonton were taken in 1897. Miss Calvert, an employee of the prominent lawyer and noted cyclist, Pat McNamara, had her photograph taken in April.[15] The photograph of Mrs. Fred Ross, wife of one of the proprietors of the Edmonton Hardware Company, although undated, was obviously taken at around the same time, for her pose and the studio background were almost identical to those used by Miss Calvert.[16] The bicycles in the photographs were of different designs, however, and the machine shown with Mrs. Ross had a small satchel, probably a repair kit, attached to the leather saddle.[17] It should be noted, too, that both women were stylishly dressed in long skirts rather than "bloomers," for the new fashion of "rational dress" had not yet been adopted in prairie communities.[18] Whatever the case may be, it is clear that Miss Calvert and Mrs. Ross took a great deal of pride in the appearance of both themselves and their machines, pursuing the activity of cycling with just as much fervour as their male counterparts. Bearing these developments in mind, a more general discussion of the relationship between cycling and the nature of club life becomes appropriate.

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[9] Bulletin, passim., 1896 and 1897.

[10] Bulletin 25 March 1897 to 12 April 1897.

[11] See respective references in the Bulletin 6 September 1897 and 15 July 1897.

[12] See, for example, McGurn, p. 9, Humber, p. 35, and I.F. Jobling, "Urbanization and Sport in Canada, 1867-1900" in R.S. Gruneau and J.G. Albinson (eds.), Canadian Sport. Sociological Perspectives (Don Mills: Addison-Wesley, 1976), p. 69.

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[13] See respective references in the Bulletin 6 May 1897 and 15 July 1897.

[14] See respective references in the Bulletin 22 April 1897 and 2 August 1897.

[15] Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. B6640. 17 April 1897.

[16] Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. B6439.

Stephen Hardy, in his study of the relationship between sport, recreation and community in Boston between 1865 and 1915, maintains that cities were "the natural spawning ground" for a wide variety of clubs and societies.[19] Association with a group, he contends, provided critical psychological and emotional support for members who may have been hesitant to indulge in "oddball" activities at an individual level, and clubs gave countless residents "...a sense of identity and belonging, a source of social unity and stability amid the fast pace of city life."[20] In this sense, sporting clubs had a special appeal since they were able to act as asylums of relaxation and diversion, allowing city dwellers to relieve the stress and anxiety that characterized urban existence.[21] As Stephen Reiss explains in his examination of American society and the rise of sports, the activity of cycling was embraced with ardour because it made nature more accessible by enabling urban folk to escape from the city into the countryside. In fact, Reiss believes that cycling became "the perfect leisure sport" because it provided the participant with exercise, fresh air, visions of natural beauty, and peace of mind whenever they were required.[22] Moreover, in cities where there was a growing dissatisfaction with public modes of travel, according to Gary Tobin's analysis, the bicycle was perceived as an ideal means of independent transport because the cyclist could avoid the schedules and confinement of both streetcars and railways.[23] Horse travel, of course, was private, but urbanites considered the animals inefficient, subject to fits of wildness, and easily fatigued. The bicycle, as Tobin observes, was never tired and quit only when the rider did.[24] Perhaps the best synthesis of these arguments is provided by Richard Harmond, who draws attention to the essential paradox underlying the popularity of the bicycle. In his opinion, "The very technological progress which the bicycle typified had brought about a tension-prone, and sometimes strife-torn, industrialized society," but it was the "wheel" itself, he contends, which offered the cyclist a means of escape from the consequences of such progress.[25] It is in this sense, according to Harmond, that the bicycle acted as an emotional palliative to the problems of urban society.[26] Other writers, notably William Beezley and Stefano Pivato, also draw on this notion that the bicycle was a symbol of both progress and flight, but their studies are concerned with the tensions of modernization in large urban centres outside North America.[27]

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[17] Ibid.
[18] Klassen, p. 4.
[19] Hardy, How Boston Played, p. 134.
[20] Ibid., p. 146.

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[21] Ibid., p. 144.
[22] Reiss, p. 65.
[23] G.A. Tobin, "The Bicycle Boom of the 1890s: The Development of Private Transportation and the Birth of the Modern Tourist," Journal of Popular Culture (Spring, 1974), p. 841.
[24] Ibid.

What each of the above authors emphasize, however, is that "the reign of the bicycle" was essentially urban in nature. Hence, while not exactly renouncing the city, cyclists were certainly anxious to experience the "green fields and running brooks" of the countryside, and the bicycle enabled them to meld the best of both worlds.[28] It was this desire for a change of environment, Hardy explains, that spurred cyclists to lobby for improvements to roads and highways - the arteries of the "great escape" - and weekend spins to outlying suburbs remained a key feature of club life throughout the last decade of the nineteenth century.[29] The difficulty is that explanations which stress the bicycle as an urban phenomenon hinder an understanding of the development of cycling in non-urban settings, obscuring the reasons why citizens in a small, rural community, for instance, would be attracted to the new machine. In a town such as Edmonton, with its wide streets, isolated buildings, and somewhat rustic environment, it is hard to imagine that the stress and anxiety of business life was in any way responsible for the popularity of the bicycle. Thus, while it may be true that survival in any frontier situation depended on a commitment to what Eliane Silverman refers to as 'the Victorian work ethic,'[30] it would be somewhat inappropriate to compare the employment conditions in a prairie town with those in an urban centre. Expressed more succinctly, the semi-rural community of Edmonton, with a population of less than fifteen hundred in 1896, was yet to suffer, or benefit from, widespread technological change, industrialization and urbanization, even though Harmond and others cite these forces as important factors underlying the acceptance of the bicycle. In Edmonton, the evidence suggests that cycling became popular precisely because it was an activity that was associated with urban attitudes and civilized behaviour, not because it offered the opportunity for an escape into bucolic surroundings. For the progressive citizens of Edmonton eager to "boost" the economic and civic image of the town, the prevalence of bicycles, and bicycle clubs, was tangible proof that the community was rapidly maturing into an important metropolis, lacking nothing that a large city could offer. It was this pioneer perception of social development, based on the belief that frontier towns could best serve their interests by emulating the sophistication of cities, that inspired many citizens to scorn the traditional image of the 'wild west' and seek the faithful reproduction of those aspects of life most closely associated with civilization. In most cases, according to Paul Voisey, this desire was reflected in enthusiasm for civic improvements such as streetlights, sidewalks, and the construction of public buildings, but at a deeper level the outward style of cities was also reproduced in the institutionalization of social life.[31] The proliferation of clubs and societies in Edmonton supports this contention and literature used to promote the town, some of which was occasionally published in the Bulletin, constantly emphasized the extensive range of cultural and athletic associations that existed in the community. In 1897, for example, the Bulletin ran a series of articles outlining the advantages of settling in the district. On one particular occasion the newspaper listed most of the facilities in the town, concluding that "Persons coming to Edmonton will find all the comforts, conveniences, and amenities of civilization, as well as the opportunity of buying or selling all sorts of commodities."[32] On the subject of club life, another article in the series asserted that newly arrived settlers could amuse themselves in a variety of ways, no matter what the season:

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[25] Harmond, p. 237.

[26] Ibid., p. 239.

[27] See W.H. Beezley "Bicycles, Modernization, and Mexico" in J. Arbena (ed.), Sport and Society in Latin America, Diffusion, Dependency, and the Rise of Mass Culture (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1988), pp. 15-28 and S. Pivato, "The Bicycle as a Political Symbol: Italy, 1885-1955," International Journal of the History of Sport (Vol. 7, No. 2. September, 1990), pp. 173-187.

[28] Hardy, How Boston Played, p. 163.

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Silverman, p. 31.

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[31] Voisey, p. 26.

> In summer, picnics, horse racing, riding, driving, bicycling, shooting, boating, canoeing, fishing, football, cricket, lacrosse, baseball, golf, lawn tennis and croquet are all mentioned; also duck shooting in spring and deer hunting in fall. Dances, concerts, amateur theatricals, literary, debating and other societies, meetings, card parties and other indoor amusements are enjoyed in winter; when trapping, sleighing, tobogganing, snowshoeing, skating, ice boating, curling, hockey and other outdoor sports suitable to the climate are keenly gone into.[33]

While the cataloguing of such activities in promotional literature may have served a variety of purposes, it is apparent that the existence of so many clubs and societies, whether they were sporting associations or not, was considered to be synonymous with urban sophistication. It is against this background that the supposed rivalry between

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[32] Bulletin 14 June 1897.
[33] Bulletin 29 April 1897.

Edmonton's two cycling groups, outlined in the previous chapter, needs to be understood. For it would be somewhat misleading to imagine that the North Star Bicycle Club and the Edmonton Bicycle Club were completely separate, antithetical bodies, constantly feuding over the true purpose of their activities. Rather, they should be seen as two groups existing within a framework that was determined not only by individual attitudes and actions but by a wide variety of social forces, not the least of which was the communal desire to reproduce urban style and structure in different forms of club life. An appreciation of this fetish for group activity, particularly as evidenced in a frontier town such as Edmonton, provides important insights into the social relationships of community life and assists a better understanding of the role of sport in society.

Before discussing other specific developments which occurred in 1897, it may be useful to underline the above argument by considering a cycling incident from the previous year. This episode, the defiance of a council by-law that prohibited the riding of bicycles on the sidewalk, is a particularly relevant example for it demonstrates how the activity of cycling created an unusual degree of tension in a town with urban aspirations. As Paul Voisey explains in his analysis of pioneer communities, many progressive towns were anxious to avoid recreational excesses such as drunkenness, gambling and brawling which were common to the frontier. In consequence, social order came to depend on the enforcement of by-laws which curbed disreputable activities and upheld expectations of civilized behaviour. Spitting and swearing in public, creating a disturbance, racing horses on the streets, vagrancy, begging, allowing children to run unsupervised at night, and riding bicycles on the sidewalk, were, according to Voisey, all forms of conduct that were regulated, if not prohibited, in pioneer towns.[34] In Edmonton, the issue of where bicycles could be ridden came to a head in May 1896, when five prominent citizens defied the council by-law. The Bulletin described the affair in the following report:

> N.D. Beck, C.M. Woodworth, S.S. Taylor, J.W. Kelly and E.J. Cann were summoned by the town council for riding their bicycles on the sidewalk. The summonses were returnable before C.W. Sutter, J.P., at 2 o'clock last Friday when Messsrs. Beck, Kelly and Cann appeared and were fined the costs of the court as it was their first offence. Messrs. S.S. Taylor and Woodworth refused to appear on account of some technicality in the wording of the summons. They have been summoned again to appear tomorrow.[35]

The initial debate over cycling by-laws in Canada had begun in 1869 when a Toronto newspaper editor urged the administrators of the city to prohibit the use of velocipedes on sidewalks.[36] Although the legal status of the bicycle as a vehicle of transportation continued to remain in dispute, the eventual paving of streets and roads in most cities meant that cyclists no longer had to keep to sidewalks for ease of travel.[37] In small towns like Edmonton, however, the deplorable condition of major thoroughfares was exacerbated by extremes in the weather and an ad hoc approach to the funding of road maintenance.[38] As early as 1892, the Bulletin complained that "Those ditches at the sides of the graded roads and streets are very likely to be the cause of some serious accident some day,"[39] and a photograph of Jasper Avenue taken ten years later reveals that potholes, ditches, mud and other obstructions still characterized the main street.[40] Not surprisingly, promotional literature aimed at projecting a positive image for the town downplayed these conditions and one article even claimed that "The beautifully firm natural roads and trails are almost perfection for bicycling."[41] Sidewalks in Edmonton were built as funds became available to the town council, but the priority for the location of these wooden constructions, which were usually elevated several feet above ground level, was often determined by petitions from members of the community. Council meetings, therefore, were often forums for those individuals or groups eager to have a sidewalk built near their store or home, and from the number of requests presented to civic officials it is clear that the provision of such amenities was considered to be a matter of some importance.[42] Given the condition of roads in Edmonton, then, it is likely that cyclists made regular use of the sidewalks and it is their activity in this regard that created something of a dilemma for the town council. As discussed earlier in the chapter, a range of societies and associations, including bicycle clubs, was perceived as a sign of civic maturity, while the bicycle itself was welcomed as a sophisticated, convenient means of transport, a harbinger of new technology and urban attitudes. In 1896, however, enthusiasm for the machine appeared to be out of hand, and it was necessary for the council to enforce restrictions prohibiting the riding of bicycles on sidewalks.[43] It would appear that what was at issue in this incident was not so much whether cycling should be regulated, but whether correct standards of social order could be maintained. In other words, the council wished to promote 'proper' behaviour, a desire that was in accord with efforts to boost the reputation of the town as a centre of culture, refinement and civilization. The five errant cyclists, as prominent and respectable citizens, must also have subscribed to the ideals of "boosterism." However, their determination to ride their bicycles with impunity demonstrates that there was some disagreement over what constituted urban sophistication.

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[34] Voisey, p. 26.
[35] Bulletin 25 May 1986.
[36] Cox, p. 58.

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[37] Hornung, p. 256.
[38] Betke, "Urban Community," p. 35.
[39] Bulletin 22 August 1892.
[40] Ernest Brown Collection: Provincial Archives, Alberta. B4767.
[41] Bulletin 29 April 1897.

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[42] Bulletin 9 April 1896.

[43] For a record of Edmonton's by-laws relating to the bicycle, see Consolidated By-Laws (Edmonton: City of Edmonton, 1917), p. 362.

The entire affair is also significant in another sense, since it helps to correct the possible misconception that members of the North Star cycling group and the Edmonton Bicycle Club were staunch rivals. In the first instance, it should be noted that three of the five men who defied the by-law were lawyers by profession, which suggests that their action was a premeditated attempt to test the validity of the cycling regulation. As with earlier efforts by the town council to limit the speed of bicycles, an issue championed by the Bulletin in 1895, it is crucial to recognize that the legal firm representing the council in these matters was headed by one of the offenders, Nicholas Dubois Beck, a member of the Edmonton Bicycle Club.[44] Cann and Kelly do not appear to be affiliated with any particular cycling club. However, it is highly relevant that Charles Woodworth, the vice-president of the North Star Bicycle Club, and Sidney Taylor, an active member of the Edmonton Bicycle Club, should also be listed among the five offenders. Their apparent collusion with Beck, Cann and Kelly, and particularly their decision to appeal the summons, demonstrates that members of Edmonton's two bicycle groups were not so much opposed to each other, but were more concerned to resist together those sections of society unwilling to give wholehearted support to the activity of cycling. Council correspondence indicates that there was some confusion over the actual wording of the relevant by-law, and when the case was finally brought before the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories in November, 1896, the judge reserved his decision.[45] Although the eventual outcome of the appeal was never discussed in the Bulletin, it was not until June, 1899, that the council instructed the police "to rigidly enforce the by-law prohibiting the riding of bicycles on sidewalks," publishing a notice in the press to that effect.[46]

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[44] Supra., pp. 64-66.

In a more general sense, the nature and form of institutional life in Edmonton also led to the dissipation of any potential conflict between the members of the two cycling clubs. Low population density and the existence of multifarious organizations virtually guaranteed that the membership of groups would overlap, helping to create what the noted frontier historian Lewis Thomas has called "social contiguity."[47] A term used to describe the cooperation and effective communication between leading groups on the frontier, "social contiguity" in Edmonton ensured that the blackballing or boycotting of groups or individuals was rare, if not non-existent. So while the North Star club was characterized by exclusivity, the fact that its members were involved in other associations meant that close and harmonious social contact with members of the Edmonton Bicycle Club was not only unavoidable but necessary. On numerous occasions the Bulletin listed members of both cycling groups in a variety of organizations, lending support to the above contention and emphasizing once again the enthusiasm of the community for club life. For example, J.D. Harrison and J.R. Fulton of the Edmonton Bicycle Club were members of the hockey team captained by W.T. Henry, the president of the North Star Club.[48] Members of both groups often attended business functions such as the Board of Trade banquet,[49] charity fundraising events like the King's Daughters' Birthday Party,[50] and political gatherings such as political autonomy meetings.[51] A.H. Goodwin and T. Hourston of the North Star group were involved in the same masonic lodge as E. Raymer, a member of the Edmonton Bicycle Club,[52] and the school board was comprised of participants from both cycling organizations.[53] In summary, cycling club members as a whole were active in thirty-nine of the forty-nine different social, sporting and business institutions that existed in Edmonton during 1896.[54] Given this network of associations it would have been difficult and inappropriate to ostracize the members of one particular club from community life in general. Nevertheless, by the following year the North Star Bicycle Club had ceased to exist, and it is important to examine its unexpected demise in the light of developments over a two year period.

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[45] See Town Secretary's Papers, Incoming Correspondence, 14 September 1896, R.G.8. Class 3.C.3/14, and the Bulletin 9 November 1896.

[46] Bulletin 1 June 1899.

[47] For a discussion of how Thomas used this term see P.A. Dunae (ed.), Ranchers' Legacy: Alberta Essays By Lewis G. Thomas (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1986).

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[48] Bulletin 17 February 1896.
[49] Bulletin 24 February 1896.
[50] Bulletin 4 May 1896.
[51] Bulletin 2 March 1896.
[52] Bulletin 20 April 1896.
[53] Bulletin 28 May 1896.

In 1896, the Bulletin made reference to the North Star Bicycle Club on fourteen separate occasions. From late January to early June, newspaper reports indicated that the club had a well-organized administrative structure and keen participants. As outline in the previous chapter, monthly meetings were held in the business premises of members, and weekly bicycle "runs" featured the display of the club uniform and formation riding. After the first day of June in 1896, however, references to the exclusive cycling group ceased and the club was never again mentioned in the press. One factor which may have contributed to the dissolution of the North Star body was the reorganization of Edmonton's original cycling association. In April 1897, the Edmonton Bicycle Club held its first meeting for the year in the Alberta Hotel and according to the report in the Bulletin:

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[54] Bulletin passim. 1896.

> The following officers were appointed for the coming season.
>
> Hon. Pres.- Frank Oliver, M.P.
> Pres. - J.A. McDougall.
> V.P. - J.D. Harrison.
> Captain - S. McNeil.
> Lieut. - Corp. Byrne.
> Sec. Treas. - J.E. Graham.
>
> Club runs were arranged for every Wednesday night at 7.30 and negotiation entered into for the securing of some rooms suitable for club quarters. The club is in affiliation with the C.W.A., an organization whose principal object is the establishment of good roads.[55]

Not only did the club express its intention to organize "runs," the preferred activity and major focus of the defunct North Star club, but the legitimacy and credibility of the group was considerably strengthened by the involvement of John Alexander McDougall and Frank Oliver. McDougall, described by historian Carl Betke as "the local merchant prince,"[56] was first elected president of the Edmonton Bicycle Club in 1896, but his remarkable range of social and commercial contacts made him an ideal candidate for mayor of the town, an office he first held in January, 1897.[57] Oliver, as the proprietor of the Bulletin and a member of parliament, was perhaps Edmonton's most prominent citizen, and his patronage of the club is especially significant for it represents a complete transformation of his attitude towards the activity of cycling. As was discussed in an earlier chapter, Frank Oliver was scathing in his criticism of the selfishness and reckless speed of cyclists in an article published in the Bulletin in 1895.[58] By 1897, however, either for reasons of political expediency, business sense, or genuine interest in cycling, he was prepared to act as the figurehead of the club. The arrangements for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebration, which was held in Edmonton on June 22 and 23, also confirmed the demise of the North Star group and reflected the pre-eminence of the Edmonton Bicycle Club. Aside from bicycle races, the main attraction for cyclists was a Chinese lantern parade in which they were involved on the evening of the second day.[59] Reports in the Bulletin indicate that all negotiations related to these events were carried out between the executive of the organizing committee, chaired by J.A. McDougall, and the secretary of the Edmonton Bicycle Club, John Graham.[60] Even though "all other bicyclists" were invited to participate in the parade, it is clear that

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[55] Bulletin 15 April 1897.

[56] C.f., Betke, "Sports Promotion in the Western Canadian City: The Example of Early Edmonton," Urban History Review (Vol. XII., No. 2, October, 1983), p. 48.

[57] McDougall was the proprietor of several general stores throughout the 1880s and the 1890s. In 1896 he was also president of the Board of Trade and the Old Timers' Association, chairman of the Edmonton Presbyterian church, auditor of the Edmonton Agricultural Society, and treasurer of Edmonton Lodge No. 53. Bulletin passim. 1896. For further details of his civic involvement see J.F. McDougall,

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"John A. McDougall, Trader," Alberta Historical Review (Summer, 1960), pp. 16-26 and J.G. MacGregor, Edmonton Trader: The Story of John A. McDougall (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1963).

[58] Supra., pp. 58-60.

[59] Bulletin 27 May 1897.

[60] Bulletin 22 April 1897 and 20 May 1897.

only one bicycle club was officially acknowledged in the preparations.[61]

In essence, however, the rapid rise and decline of the North Star Bicycle Club can best be explained by reference to developments outside of Edmonton. In 1896, reports of the discovery of gold and silver in the Kootenay region of British Columbia stimulated a mining boom in the towns of Nelson, Rossland and Sandon.[62] By 1897, "the magical year of the gold rush," the focus of attention shifted to the Yukon area, northwest of Edmonton, where even larger mineral deposits had been uncovered.[63] James MacGregor, in his history of Edmonton, maintains that the bulk of Edmontonians remained at home during the gold rush and many acted as suppliers to overland parties, which were largely made up of "greenhorns."[64] The Bulletin received numerous letters from potential prospectors and in August, 1897, one inquirer, anxious to reach the Yukon goldfields, asked "... if he could get through on his bicycle."[65] By the summer of 1898 the rush was virtually over and most traders had dropped the popular "Klondike" motif from their advertising.[66] For some citizens, however, the lure of wealth and the chance to further their business interests in the new gold-mining towns proved irresistible. Many merchants and professional men, who already possessed considerable capital reserves, seemed anxious to invest their skills and resources in other ventures, even if this involved moving away from friends and established homes in Edmonton. The economic imperative that had brought these men to the frontier also drew them away, and it is precisely this quest for wealth, a restless search for new prosperity and fresh challenges, that helps to account for the sudden demise of the North Star Bicycle Club. Not only did economic opportunism lead two key office bearers to permanently depart Edmonton, but the gold rush disrupted the commercial and leisure activities of nearly all other club members, making it difficult for the group to function in any meaningful sense. For this reason, it is pertinent to briefly discuss the movements and activities of North Star club members during this period.

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[61] Bulletin 14 June 1897.
[62] Bulletin 3 September 1896.
[63] MacGregor, p. 125.
[64] Ibid., pp. 123-135. See also J. Blower, Gold Rush (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1971), who provides a photographic overview of this period.
[65] Bulletin 23 August 1897.
[66] MacGregor, p. 125.

J.D. McBride, the original president of the group, was the only member to take formal leave of the club, and even before his departure to Rossland in May, 1896, W.T. Henry had been elected as his replacement.[67] Rossland itself, situated just west of the Rocky Mountains, was known as the land of "bullion on tap,"[68] and McBride's hasty decision to sell his existing hardware company in order to open a similar store in a boom town, reflects his entrepreneurial spirit. The vice-president of the North Star organization, Charles Woodworth, had first arrived in Edmonton from Nova Scotia in May, 1893.[69] A lawyer by profession, he also owned a large farm at nearby Poplar Lake and was the treasurer of the Edmonton Butter and Cheese Manufacturing Association.[70] In October, 1896, he was involved in a "gold prospecting expedition" and in December he departed for the Kootenay region before eventually moving to the Yukon.[71] Another prominent official in the exclusive bicycle club was James Stovel, who went to great lengths to expand his tinsmithing and hardware store with the addition of a workshop in September, 1896.[72] He was also the landlord of at least one other newly renovated building and he owned a piano which was "in first class condition."[73] In January, 1897, he visited Charles Woodworth in British Columbia and was almost convinced to join the rush to a new boom town.[74] On his return to Edmonton, the editor of the Bulletin seemed pleased to announce that:

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[67] Bulletin 13 April 1896 and 21 May 1896.
[68] Bulletin 5 April 1897.

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[69] Bulletin 18 May 1893.

[70] See respective references in the Bulletin 6 July 1896 and 13 January 1896.

[71] See respective references in the Bulletin 8 October 1896 and 28 December 1896. Further anecdotal material is provided in Jamieson, p. 7.

[72] Bulletin 10 September 1896.

[73] See respective references in the Bulletin 3 February 1896 and 17 September 1896.

[74] Bulletin 28 January 1897.

> Jas. Stovel, who was suffering a short time ago from a violent attack of the "Kootenay fever," during which he contemplated removing his hardware business to Revelstoke, has quite recovered and decided to remain in the town in which he is "so well and favourably known."[75]

Alexander Goodwin, who had the latest dental equipment installed in his surgery,[76] and W.T. Henry, who had recently enlarged his clothing store,[77] both spent some time together "on a prospecting and claim locating expedition up the river."[78] Likewise, Thomas Hourston, a fur dealer and a dairy farmer,[79] and William Clarke, a builder who arrived in Edmonton in 1892, maintaining "... a position in the front ranks, financially, socially and fraternally,"[80] both made individual trips to the Kootenay district.[81] The four other members of the North Star Bicycle Club - Edward Carey, Godfrid Corriveau, John Fairbanks and Joseph Laurencelle - appear to have remained in Edmonton, and it should be mentioned that Fairbanks, a clerk, and Laurencelle, a bank manager, were not self-employed and were perhaps restricted in the amount of time they had available for travel. The major point to appreciate is that once the gold rush began, it had a disruptive influence on the lives and activities of many North Star club members. The lure of prosperity not only caused the president and vice-president to leave the town and move to the goldfields, but it provoked other members of the club to abandon their business affairs and social life on a similar quest, albeit temporarily. It must also be acknowledged that all of these men appeared to have successful, if not diversified, professional and business interests. Their search for new wealth, therefore, can be characterized by a spirit of adventure as well as by economic concerns.

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[75] Bulletin 18 March 1897.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Bulletin 16 March 1896.
[78] Bulletin 5 March 1896.
[79] Ibid.
[80] A.O. McRae, History of the Province of Alberta Vol. I. (Edmonton: The Western Canada History Col, 1912), pp. 731-732.
[81] See respective references in the Bulletin 6 September 1897 and 14 September 1896.

The brief existence of the North Star Bicycle Club can thus be attributed to the transience of its members, a group of men with a strong entrepreneurial vision and the desire to seek out new investment opportunities, wherever that led them. During 1896 and 1897, their cycling club dissolved, not from lack of interest, or internal conflict, or competition from the Edmonton Bicycle Club, but simply because the absence of members meant that the group could not function in an effective or cohesive manner. The fact that they were an exclusive body with a limited membership merely compounded the problem. With so many members away from Edmonton for varying lengths of time, the group not only lacked clear leadership, but the purpose and unity of the club was undermined. If their intention was to display their uniforms and machines by formation riding and regular "runs", with roles such as bugler, lieutenant and captain clearly defined for participants then the absence of even two or three members was critical. The situation was problematic, for the solution would have entailed admitting more cyclists to the club, anathema to a group which prided itself on exclusivity. Not surprisingly, the problem of transient membership during the gold rush period was also relevant to the Edmonton Bicycle Club. Several members were drawn directly to the Kootenay or Yukon region, and others were absent from the town for other reasons. As with the North Star club, most were business or professional men, and nearly all had substantial capital reserves. Sidney Taylor, for instance, whose financial resources were outlined in the previous chapter,[82] departed for the gold mining town of Nelson in British Columbia in February, 1897.[83] Prior to leaving, his household possessions - including two bicycles - were sold by auction, and he and his wife were given a fond farewell by the members of the Methodist church.[84] T.A. Stephen, another member of the Edmonton Bicycle Club, was a general agent of the Alberta Loan Association, manager of the Edmonton Pork Packaging Company and owner of a "Hog Ranch."[85] After a lengthy visit to the Kootenay area in

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[82] Supra., pp. 94-95.
[83] Bulletin 18 February 1897.
[84] See respective references in the Bulletin 10 December 1897 and 17 December 1897.
[85] See respective references in the Bulletin 13 July 1896, 2 January 1896, and 11 June 1896.

August, 1896, he established a brokerage office in Rossland in September of that year.[86] During 1897, Arthur Harrison, Pat McNamara and Corporal Byrne were all absent from Edmonton for prolonged periods,[87] while C.W.S. Bridges and J.R. Fulton left the town on a permanent basis.[88] Unlike the North Star organization, however, the Edmonton Bicycle Club was not drastically affected by such absences. It had a large membership base, a stable core of officials, and, because it was not exclusive in nature, it had the capacity to absorb any number of new members. Even though Henry, Stovel and Goodwin maintained their commercial interest in bicycles by continuing to act as agents or suppliers of cycling equipment and services,[89] other remaining members of the North Star club showed no further enthusiasm for the machine or cycling activities. Only one of them, Thomas Hourston, switched his allegiance to the Edmonton Bicycle Club, accepting the position of vice-president in April, 1898.[90] With the standing of the town's original and more broadly based cycling club enhanced by the support and leadership of Frank Oliver and John McDougall, the future of the Edmonton Bicycle Club seemed assured. On the other hand, the small and exclusive North Star Bicycle Club existed for only six months and then slipped quietly into oblivion.

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[86] See respective references in the Bulletin 3 September 1896 and 10 September 1896.

[87] See respective references in the Bulletin 22 July 1897, 15 July 1897 and 18 March 1897.

[88] See respective references in the Bulletin 28 June 1897 and 20 August 1896.

[89] See respective references in the Bulletin 6 May 1897, 5 May 1898, and 10 April 1899.

[90] Bulletin 15 May 1898.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS: Sport in a Pioneer Town

Sport is not reducible to a single essence. As Richard Holt maintains in his recent overview of British sport:

> The writer of a historical synthesis is not out to champion one theory or another. What may seem conceptually confused and unacceptable to the theorist may be appropriate and right for the historian drawing on different theories to illuminate different aspects of what is in reality not a single phenomenon but a set of loosely related activities shifting their forms and meanings over time.[1]

Theoretical neatness, in other words, cannot always account for the complexity of historical reality.[2] In many ways, this assertion is especially true regarding the nature of frontier communities, for no single historical theory can do justice to the complicated interaction of forces that shaped the character of pioneer settlements.[3] As a consequence, sporting activities in such societies should be understood with these limitations in mind. This is not to eschew theory, but rather to recognize that a variety of approaches may be necessary in order to achieve a better understanding of the past.

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[1] R. Holt, Sport and the British. A Modern History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898), p. 362.
[2] Ibid., p. 263.
[3] Voisey, p. 1.

Much of Edmonton's history still awaits detailed analysis. Academic studies of social life in the town prior to the twentieth century, for example, are almost non-existent, and few attempts have been made to examine individual institutions. Brief biographical sketches of prominent citizens are available, and several general histories have been published, but by and large there is a dearth of scholarly work concerning the pioneer era and the establishment of the town. It is not surprising, then, that the history of sport in Edmonton during this period has also been neglected. Some theses do give a broad overview of physical activities in the western Canadian region, but none give specific sports in Edmonton the exhaustive coverage they deserve. In particular, most of the research into the development of cycling in Alberta has drawn on material from the Calgary experience. The result is that even the best treatment of the history of the bicycle in Canada, provided by William Humber, suffers from a narrow perspective and fails to comment with any authority on the situation in Edmonton. But this study does more than fill a gap in the existing literature. By providing a detailed narrative of the events that trace the evolution of cycling in a pioneer town between 1890 and 1897, it illustrates a number of themes and raises several important questions concerning the relationship between sport and community life on the frontier. Before some concluding comments are made, therefore, it may be useful to provide a summary of the main issues raised in the preceding chapters.

Firstly, it must be acknowledged that the bicycle is a multi-purpose vehicle. Early references to the machine in Edmonton focus almost exclusively on its racing capabilities and the formation of the town's first bicycle club by several prominent citizens in June, 1893, reflects such a preoccupation. By the end of 1895, however, it is clear that the bicycle had a function beyond its use for sport. Both women and older men, for example, adopted the machine as a convenient means of transportation, using it for short trips within the vicinity of the town and for touring the countryside. The bicycle was still expensive, though, and its prohibitive cost coupled with limited supply ensured that owners enjoyed considerable prestige in the community. A symbol of status and wealth, the bicycle was also representative of urban technology and sophistication, and the existence of a cycling club was seen by many as a sign of civic maturity. This is especially relevant because the history of cycling as a whole has usually been presented in the context of urban development, with the popularity of the bicycle explained in terms of its contradictory nature. On the one hand, the bicycle represented the benefits of technological progress and typified the refinements of civilized existence, but on the other hand it was the means of escape from a tension-prone industrialized society.[4] Such interpretations have only a limited application in the case of Edmonton, however, for there is very little sense in which cycling can be portrayed as flight from the detrimental effects of life in a city, an emotional palliative from urban problems. Rather, the attraction of the bicycle was based on a pioneer mentality which associated cycling with metropolitan sophistication and the conspicuous display of wealth. For this reason, the history of cycling in a small prairie town such as Edmonton can be illuminating, for it not only sheds light on local developments but it acts as a necessary corrective to studies which take no account of the popularity of the bicycle in non-urban settings. The nature of club life is also important in this regard for it is clear that a fetish for social institutions characterized Edmonton as it did other pioneer communities. Significantly, the formal policies and the outlook of most clubs in the town were directed by a segment of society distinguished by status, professional or commercial employment, and high levels of income. As one would expect, it was these features that also typified the cycling fraternity.

Such a scenario may have been worthy of examination in its own right, but the formation of a second, more exclusive, bicycle club in January, 1896, magnifies the importance of this study. Inexplicably, the existence of the North Star Bicycle Club has been overlooked by historians and yet as an aberration in Edmonton's sporting development, the reasons for the existence of the club, and its unexpected dissolution within six months, offer fruitful ground for speculation. As has been suggested, the decline of the North Star club was not so much a result of rivalry with the Edmonton Bicycle Club, or conflict with non-cycling sections of the community. Its demise was due to the nature of the club itself and events that had their genesis outside of Edmonton. The proximity of the gold rush in the Kootenay and Yukon regions, for example, had a strong bearing on the transience of members in both cycling groups, but the desire of North Star club members to remain exclusive hampered their ability to respond to such a situation. The dramatic drop in the retail cost of bicycles was also a factor in the club's decline, for the status associated with belonging to a special group which owned and paraded expensive machines was undermined by the availability of the same machines at a reduced price. Furthermore, in a small club where specific roles were carefully designated, it was awkward to conduct organized activities when two or three members were absent for indeterminate lengths of time. By the same token, when an alternate cycling group could count on the leadership and patronage of the mayor and a member of parliament, its stability and future must have seemed assured. But since the North Star club had few administrators present in Edmonton during the latter part of 1897, its potential for continued existence must have appeared bleak. In the end, it was almost inevitable that members of a cycling group who were so concerned with their appearance and the prominent display of their wealth, should also be those most affected by the spirit of economic opportunism engendered by the gold rush.

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[4] Harmond, p. 237.

The purpose of this study has been to provide a context for the social history of cycling in a late nineteenth century pioneer town. It has achieved this aim by setting out a detailed narrative of events relating to the use of the bicycle in Edmonton between 1890 and 1897. In doing so, it has not only filled a gap in the literature, assisting a knowledge and better understanding of the period, but it has laid the foundation for similar investigations. To date, the development of sport on the frontier has only been "sketched in" by historians. There are still many gaps and a considerable number of inconsistencies that need to be explored. The questions posed in this thesis, therefore, will provide a useful starting point for future inquiries into the nature of sport and social life in pioneer communities. Were all sports dominated by a certain occupational class or group of citizens? To what extent were women involved or interested in other physical activities on the frontier? What particular recreations can be associated with desires for an urban lifestyle? How did the pioneer mentality, the restless search for new challenges and economic prosperity, affect the development of other sporting institutions? Such questions are difficult to answer without recourse to a range of studies that look at particular sports and recreations in detail. If the patterns of behaviour, attitudes, and qualities implicit within sport are key indicators of basic cultural values, as is generally acknowledged by practitioners in the field, then an understanding of Edmonton's pioneer past will be enhanced by an investigation of not only cycling, but other sporting forms.

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The major primary source for this study was the Edmonton Bulletin. Every issue of the newspaper published between 1890 and 1899 was examined in detail. Selected issues of the Calgary Herald, the Medicine Hat News and the South Edmonton News were also consulted, along with the minute books and correspondence files of the Edmonton Town Council. Publications of the Canadian Wheelmen's Association, which form part of the Lorne Shields Collection of cycling memorabilia, located at the National Museum of Science and Technology, Ottawa, were utilized, as were photographs from the Ernest Brown Collection, located at the Provincial Archives of Alberta. The catalogues of bicycle manufacturing companies, examples of which are housed in the library of the Reynolds-Alberta Museum, Wetaskiwin, were another useful source of information.

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APPENDIX A

Membership of the North Star Bicycle Club, 1896

	SURNAME	INITIALS	CLUB POSITION	OCCUPATION
1.	Carey	E.	Member	Merchant (Retired?)
2.	Clark	W.H.	Sec/Treasurer	Carpenter/building contractor
3.	Corriveau	G.	Bugler	Merchant, Edmonton Hardware Co.
4.	Fairbanks	J.E.	Captain	Clerk, Larue and Picard general store
5.	Goodwin	A.H.	Member	Dentist
6.	Henry	W.T.	President	Merchant, men's store
7.	Hourston	T.	Member	Fur dealer/dairy farmer
8.	Laurencelle	J.E.	Member	Manager, LaBanque Jacques Cartier
9.	McBride	J.D.	President	Merchant, Edmonton Hardware Co.
10.	Stovel	J.A.	Lieutenant	Merchant/tinsmith
11.	Woodworth	C.M.	Vice-President	Barrister/Solicitor

Source: Edmonton Bulletin

APPENDIX B

Membership of The Edmonton Bicycle Club, 1896

	SURNAME	INITIALS	CLUB POSITION	OCCUPATION
1.	Aldridge	H.	Member	Clerk, Hudson's Bay Co.
2.	Beck	N.D.	Member	Barrister/Solicitor
3.	Bowen	H.	Member	Agent for bicycles, sewing machines
4.	Bridges	C.W.S.	Member	Clerk, Imperial Bank
5.	Emery	E.C.	Member	Barrister/Solicitor
6.	Fulton	J.R.	Lieutenant	Clerk/Imperial Bank
7.	Graham	J.E.	Secretary/ Treasurer	Clerk, Hudson's Bay Co.
8.	Griesbach	W.A.	Member	Articled clerk
9.	Harrison	A.G.	Member	Civil Engineer (?)
10.	Harrison	J.D.	Member	Physician
11.	Kinnaird	G.J.	Member	Manager, Hudson's Bay Co.
12.	Kirkpatrick	G.R.F.	Captain	Manager, Imperial Bank
13.	McDougall	J.A.	President	Merchant, general store
14.	McInnis	H.L.	Member	Physician
15.	McNamara	P.L.	Vice-President	Barrister/Solicitor
16.	McNeill	S.	Member	Merchant (?)
17.	Raymer	E.	Member	Jeweller
18.	Ross	F.	Member	Merchant, Edmonton Hardware Co.

	SURNAME	INITIALS	CLUB POSITION	OCCUPATION
19.	Stephen	T.A.	Member	Loan agent/Hog farmer
20.	Taylor	A.	Hon. President	Postmaster
21.	Taylor	H.C.	Member	Barrister/Solicitor
22.	Taylor	S.S.	Member	Barrister/Solicitor

Source: Edmonton Bulletin